The UNESCO Courier

A window open on the world

March 1972 (25th year) - U.K.: 13p - North America: 50 cts - France: 1.70 F

LATIN AMERICA'S CULTURAL EXPLOSION

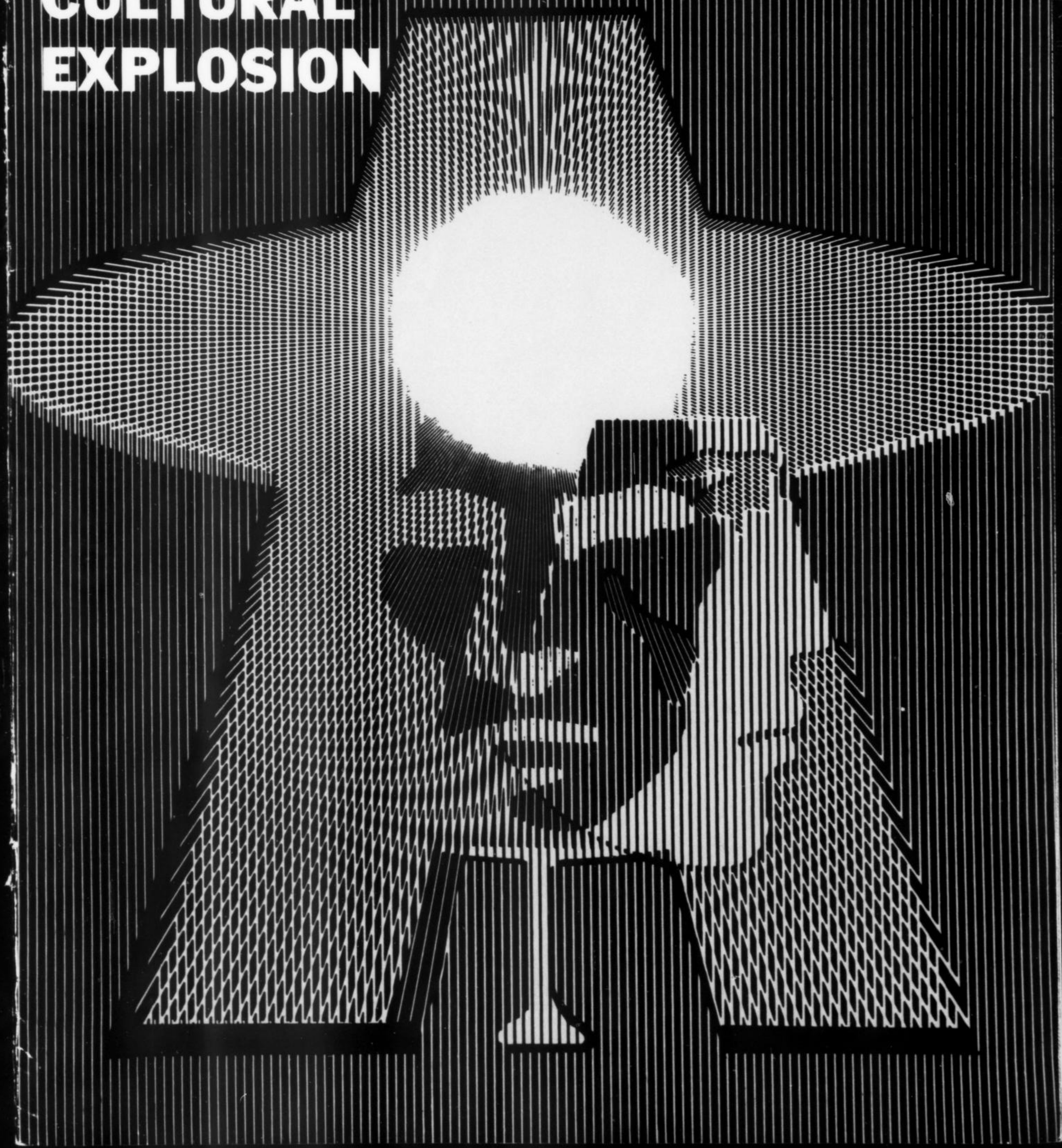

Photo Brazilian Embassy, Paris

Stairway of the prophets

TREASURES OF WORLD ART

64 ***Brazil***

Among the sculptors of 18th century Brazil, one name stands out above all others: Antonio Francisco Lisboa, known affectionately as "O Aleijadinho" (The Little Cripple) because his hands were made almost useless by a deforming disease. Yet O Aleijadinho, the son of a Negro mother and a father of Portuguese origin, painfully continued to carve the distinctive baroque sculpture that still decorates many churches in the province of Minas Gerais in south-central Brazil. Shown here are four of his 12 more-than-life-sized figures of the prophets on the stairway of the Matosinhos Church at Congonhas do Campo, executed when he was over 60. O Aleijadinho (1730-1814) is said to have worked with hammer and chisel attached to his crippled hands, and many legends grew up around him. But his true story is that of an indomitable will that triumphed over adversity to give Brazil masterpieces of baroque art imbued with a rare power and vitality.

The UNESCO Courier

MARCH 1972
25TH YEAR

PUBLISHED IN 12 LANGUAGES

English	Japanese
French	Italian
Spanish	Hindi
Russian	Tamil
German	Hebrew
Arabic	Persian

Published monthly by UNESCO

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Sales and Distribution Offices
Unesco, Place de Fontenoy, Paris-7e.

Annual subscription rates: £ 1.30 stg.; $5.00 (North America); 17 French francs or equivalent; 2 years : £ 2.30 stg.; 30 F. Single copies : 13 p stg.; 50 cents : 1.70 F.

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The UNESCO COURIER is published monthly, except in August and September when it is bi-monthly (11 issues a year) in English, French, Spanish, Russian, German, Arabic, Japanese, Italian, Hindi, Tamil, Hebrew and Persian. For list of distributors see inside back cover.

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The Unesco Courier is indexed monthly in the Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature, published by H. W. Wilson Co., New York, and in Current Contents - Education, Philadelphia, U.S.A.

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N° 3 - 1972 MC 72-2-275 A

ANGLAIS

1972 International Book Year

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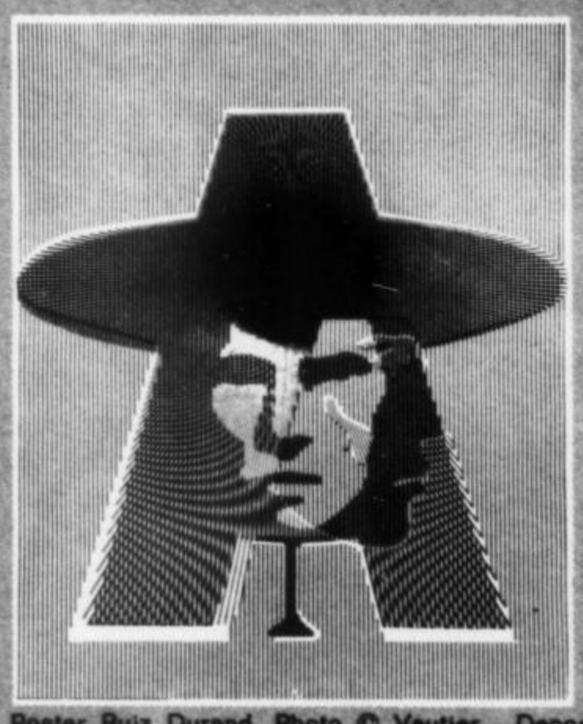

Poster Ruiz Durand. Photo © Vautier - Decool

Cover

This month's cover is meant to symbolize the varied faces of Latin America today and the richness of its culture derived from the mixture of different races and peoples. The cover is a poster produced by a Peruvian artist, Ruiz Durand, for a land reform campaign launched by the Peruvian Government, and evokes the image of the great Peruvian chief, Tupac Amaru, descendant of the Incas, who in 1780 led a revolt against the Spanish rule. This issue of the Unesco Courier is devoted in its entirety to the culture of Latin America, with special emphasis on the literature and art of the continent.

In the past quarter of a century, profound changes have been occurring in Latin America which have led certain critics to remark that Latin America is witnessing a veritable "Cultural Explosion". Since 1967, Unesco has been carrying out a wide-ranging study of Latin American cultures, covering literature, philosophy, architecture, town-planning, the plastic arts, music, theatre, the cinema, etc. For this ambitious enterprise, Unesco has secured the collaboration of a large number of Latin American scholars and specialists. Many of these studies will be presented in separate volumes under the general title "Latin America Within its Culture". The first volume, dealing with literature, is scheduled to appear later this year or early in 1973. It will first be published in Spanish, probably in collaboration with a commercial publisher. It is planned that editions in other languages will follow in due course. Most of the articles published in this issue will appear in more extensive and elaborate form in the Unesco series of cultural books on Latin America. (Other aspects of civilization, science and education in Latin America were presented in our special issue, "Latin America, 150 years of Independence", in June 1961).

Latin American countries no longer want to live on the smoke-screen prestige of past history. World events affect us directly and dramatically, and demand an answer: either the oppression of the past or the transformation of the original forms of society for a common life of dignity where the sharing of material wealth is not opposed to individual freedom.

Alfredo Pareja Diezcanseco (Ecuador)

São Paulo, Brazil's skyscraper city and Latin America's leading industrial centre with a population of 6 million.

LATIN AMERICA'S CULTURAL EXPLOSION

by
Cesar Fernandez-Moreno

"AMERICA is the land of the future. In years to come one will point to its historical importance, perhaps in a direct challenge between North and South America... America is a land of dreams for all who are weary of Old Europe, now a museum of the past... Everything that has taken place in America up until now has been a mere echo of the Old World, a reflection of foreign ways. But as the land of the future, America is not our concern, since the philosopher makes no prophecies."

A century and a half have passed since Hegel made this prediction for America, while protesting that he was no prophet. The future of which he wrote has now become America's present; the continent of his time has already passed into history. North America is now the home of the world's most powerful nation, and South America—or rather, present-day Latin America—represents one of the most dynamic cultural concepts in the modern world.

Latin America commands world attention for a number of reasons, the first being its population explosion. Latin America's growth rate is the highest of any continent: 2.9 per cent annually. Its population now numbers more than 270 million, unevenly distributed over 21 million square kilometres of land.

Occurring in a so-called underdeveloped economy, this population explosion threatens to spark off a political explosion, and this chain reaction or sequence of explosions can be expected, in turn, to bring about a cultural explosion in Latin America.

Yet why is it that countries which are far from being wholly Latin in either language or customs have become known collectively as "Latin America"? What is Latin America? And first of all, why "Latin"?

Three of the nations which discovered, conquered and colonized the new continent—Spain, Portugal and France—spoke Latin languages. So the broad historical definition "Latin America" has been applied to all the lands in the new continent which were

CONTINUED PAGE 6

CESAR FERNANDEZ-MORENO, *of Argentina, is head of the Unesco programme of cultural studies on Latin America described above. Essayist, critic and poet, he has founded and directed various literary magazines, and has written for radio, television and the cinema in Latin America. His books on culture include "Introduccion à la Poesia" (1962), "La Realidad y los Papeles" (Books and Reality, 1967) and "Argentina" (to appear shortly).*

Photo © Urs F. Kluyver, Hamburg

Photo © from "Buenos Aires", photos by Alicia D'Amico and Sara Facio text by Julio Cortázar. Editorial Sudamericana S.A., Buenos Aires

LAT. AM. CULTURAL EXPLOSION *(Continued)*

peopled by these three European powers, in contradistinction to the "Anglo-Saxon" countries of North America.

But the Mexican writer, José Luis Martínez, in his recent study on unity and diversity in Latin America, points out that its present make-up "is somewhat more complicated than the simple pattern which prevailed up to the mid-20th century.

"It still comprises the original group of 21 countries: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Puerto Rico, El Salvador, Uruguay and Venezuela. But Puerto Rico is a self-governing commonwealth associated with the United States, and Puerto Ricans have U.S. citizenship. And four new countries have been created since 1960: Jamaica, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, and Guiana, mainly English-speaking, which belong to the British Commonwealth of Nations."

The Conquest of the 16th century practically annihilated the great Middle American and Andean cultures, though at the same time it infused them with new life by transforming them into the first vehicles for a process of westernization.

This process also affected the other peoples of America, who were at that time in less advanced stages of development—the peoples to whom the name "Indians" was given by European navigators and explorers, misled by the monumental geographical error which led them to believe that they had reached East Asia.

Within what is now called Latin America, another world with non-Latin roots was to emerge: the African community.

During the 16th and 17th centuries, slave trading—the exploitation of people of one colour by those of another —was carried on in the Caribbean area and elsewhere. One hundred million Negroes were shipped from Africa though only a third were to arrive at their destination in the New World.

Yet this infamous commerce had some surprising results: the slaves rewarded their masters by handing on what they had been able to retain of their African culture, by teaching them many things, from singing and dancing to fighting for freedom.

This African America had a powerful influence, not only in the Caribbean area itself, but in the frontier zones of the north of South America and the south of North America. These boundary areas are thus both a barrier and a channel of communication, and in any event, a source of enrichment.

The complex network of relationships in Latin America thus offers practically limitless scope for interaction and reaction, and tempts one to draw parallels with other similar or comparable situations.

Yet, the more one tries to discern the true nature of this huge region, the more indistinct its image becomes. The sociologist, Gino Germani, points to two contradictory viewpoints, "diametrically opposed, but concurring to accord a real identity to Latin America."

The first "emphasizes the Latin or Graeco-Roman, Christian, Spanish or Iberian character of the American subcontinent." In the second, "Latin America is seen as a unit, not merely in cultural and social terms, but also—

CENTURY OF THE PEOPLE?

A thumbnail sketch of our history across the centuries would give this outline: the 16th century was the century of the conquistadors, when the Spanish people, under their great captains, brought a whole continent of hope under the spread of a single flag; the 17th century was that of our forefathers and the birth of a new people to rejoice in this land; the 18th century was that of the forerunners and heralds of liberty; the 19th century was the century of the "Liberators" who separated America from Spain and demonstrated the might of the masses who served under their flags. . .Will the 20th century be the century of the people?

Germán Arciniegas (Colombia)

Photo © Rune Hassner - G. Bern, Paris

Left, workmen at an industrial site in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Right, a potter arrives at the Indian market centre of Chichicastenango, Guatemala.

and especially—in political terms... The unifying factor is an external one, antagonistic and menacing."

In the first of these approaches the key to the enigma seems to be cultural, and in the second, political. But both, we should note, are qualified by still another factor—geography: in the first case, the reference to the "American sub-continent", and in the second, to an "external" factor.

Such special reasoning is almost inevitable in any attempt to clarify the image of Latin America. A merely ethnic criterion, contrasting Latin with Anglo-Saxon stocks, would meet the case no better; not only because of the Indians, Africans and various later immigrants, but also because of the ethnic intermingling which can be found on many of the West Indian islands, where a mixture of Indian, Spanish and African blood is given the all-embracing label of "Latin". A striking example is Haiti, a French-speaking country with a mainly Negro population.

A more recent development to be taken into account is the now evident racial and social penetration of the southern part of the United States by Latin peoples. Latin America is infiltrating North America from below, by a sort of demographic capillary attraction running up through Puerto Rico, Mexico and Cuba. The invasion might be said, in one sense, to compensate the Latin American people for the territories they lost when their nations were in course of formation.

Nor would a purely linguistic approach be acceptable, taking Latin America to consist of those countries which speak Spanish or Portuguese. Of the 254 million people who made up the population of Latin America in 1968, over 164 million (64.5 per cent) spoke Spanish; and over 85 million were Portuguese-speaking Brazilians (33.4 per cent). The remaining 2.1 per cent spoke French or English or (in Curaçao and Surinam) Dutch.

Yet this mixture of Western languages is not the only obstacle to a simple definition of Latin America in linguistic terms. Pre-Columbian tongues survive and are widely used in some countries (as in bilingual Paraguay where Spanish and the Guarani Indian language are spoken). For similar reasons, a comparison that contrasts the Catholicism of Latin America with the Protestantism of North America is irrelevant, since about one-quarter of the population of the United States are Catholics.

In spite of this confused tangle of concepts, the modern world is beginning to see in a new light and to attribute a real meaning to the complex ensemble which persists in calling itself "Latin America".

If we delve deeper to find the roots of this apparent unity, history provides the first clue: it lies in the dependence of the whole sub-continent to a succession of foreign powers. Latin America was first subject to Iberian domination; after this crumbled, the British and then the North Americans built up new empires in Latin America, not this time in the political but in the economic sphere.

If this stigma of dependence is the first point to be considered in defining the elusive concept of Latin America, the second is its involvement in the Great Divide of current history—the widening gulf between rich and poor countries. This contrast is strikingly illustrated by the two Americas, where the North is the rich man and the South the poor relation.

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE

Melting-pot of races and peoples

These two criteria are complemented and confirmed by a third more elementary factor: geography. Latin America comprises all of the continent which lies south of the Rio Grande, or Rio Bravo (marking the frontier between the United States and Mexico). This explains the familiar expression "South of the Rio Grande": south of the river there is a certain cultural, political, racial, linguistic and religious uniformity.

Three motives for the colonization of America have often been attributed to the Spaniards: the warlike drive acquired in reconquering part of Spain's territory from the Arabs; Catholic missionary zeal; and lastly, cupidity (for gold, slaves and women). Each historian and writer is apt to stress the motive which appeals to him most strongly; but in practice it was no doubt a combination of the three given above that led to the integration of the Old World with its other half.

Christopher Colombus was to some extent a mystic, but this did not prevent him from adopting an elaborate strategy to dazzle the *Reyes Católicos*, Ferdinand and Isabella, with the gold of the continent he wished to "sell" them.

"Gold is the greatest good", he wrote, "gold becomes treasure, and whoever possesses it can obtain all he desires in this world; it can even lead souls to Heaven." From gold to Heaven; here was Colombus' career in a nutshell.

What also influenced the Spaniards was the astonishment that filled the hearts and minds of the explorers and conquistadors. The awe felt by Columbus, face to face with America, often bordered on delirium: when he approached the mouth of the Orinoco, he thought he had discovered one of the rivers flowing from Paradise.

THE same amazement gripped every Spaniard who came after him. Indians who smoke, for example, are described by the conquistadors as "men and women who walk about fumigating themselves with a burning firebrand." An atmosphere of knightly adventure illuminated the conquest of Mexico. The great Aztec city of Tenochtitlan, wrote the conquistador and chronicler, Diaz del Castillo, "recalls the enchantments related in the book of Amadis de Gaula."

Cortes himself discovered farther north the coastline which he named California from an early 16th century tale of adventure and daring. None of the Europeans could believe what he saw with his own eyes: none felt that he was the master of his fate.

The Indians, on their side, were puzzled by the sight of a man on horseback, which they assumed to be some sort of centaur; and they were dumbfounded when a rider dismounted from his steed: one creature dividing into two! The Incas supposed that horses ate metal because of the bit held in the animal's mouth; when the Spaniards asked for fodder for their mounts, they were offered gold!

Out of this mutual astonishment was to grow the whole Latin American culture, with all its creative art. Art is very often nothing more than an expression of amazement, which generates in the artist an impulse to share his extraordinary vision with others. In America, this impulse turned the conquistadors themselves, and humble, semi-illiterate soldiers, into unsuspected authors: in simple but wonderfully vivid words they recounted the surprising things they had seen or imagined they saw.

The great pre-Columbian civilizations were rich in architecture, sculpture and music (music that has been handed down almost intact to the present day). The chief European contributions were language, religion and various forms of technology unknown to America. But in the course of history, Latin America's store of culture tended to be polarized in a sort of sterile alternative, harking back to the conqueror-conquered situation: European on the one hand, American on the other.

The American element preserved the cultural remains of the great civilizations which flourished before the discovery and conquest of the sub-continent, such as those which still survive in the present republics of Mexico and Peru.

The European element was the culture brought by the pioneers and conquistadors, among other products of the Western civilization they represented; it was thus a specifically European phenomenon, although implanted by the colonizers in the new lands incorporated in their dominions.

This division created an antithesis which long distorted the relationship between the Latin American and European cultures, by assuming the only authentic, original contribution of Latin America to be those vestiges of its civilizations which had survived the impact of conquest and colonization. Viewed in this light, European culture was thus rejected as being colonialist and purely imitative in nature.

Indeed, being vanquished by military might, the original inhabitants of America—the real Americans—were despoiled of their empires and possessions, to receive in exchange the benefits, highly questionable from their point of view, of expanding Western culture.

But although they were driven towards the borders of their empires and reduced to a marginal proletariat, the process was halted before all traces of them were wiped out. They survived and still exist, a genuine if not an influential component of the new Western world now evolving. Incorporated in this new world are many of the characteristics of their distinct civilizations, now reckoned among the outstanding traits of the originality of Latin America.

A mixed culture inevitably emerged from the opening-up of the country, not only because of the widespread racial fusion that resulted from the absence of women in the Spanish expeditions, but owing to the intercommunication essential for mutual understanding. The Spaniards had to explain Europe to the Americans, and the latter interpreted America to the Europeans. First the Indians and later the *mestizos*, of mixed Indian and Spanish ancestry, developed a new consciousness of themselves as Americans.

The solution to the unrealistic alternative between the American and the European was to become both, that is, to become an Americanized European or a Europeanized American. A synthesized conception of its own nature thus prevailed in the higher Latin American culture.

This recognizes not only the contributions of the original cultures, but also those of the European pioneers, the fundamental African element which reached America through the slave trade, and lastly, the rejuvenating currents of learning brought by the immigrations of the 19th century.

"The New World", wrote the famous French anthropologist, the late Paul Rivet, "has been a focus for the convergence of races and peoples since prehistoric times... It is curious indeed that the history of America's evolution should merely repeat the ethnic trends which presided over its first peopling. Since its discovery, America has continued to be a focus of attraction for the most varied peoples and races, just as it was during the long pre-Columbian population process."

Thus, the possible Asian and Oceanic ancestry of all the American peoples, and America's possible geographical continuity with Africa in the remote past, are hypotheses which would provide a world background for America's claim to universality. America is, as it were, a preview of the world of the future, where, overriding differences of race and culture, mankind will find real unity. ■

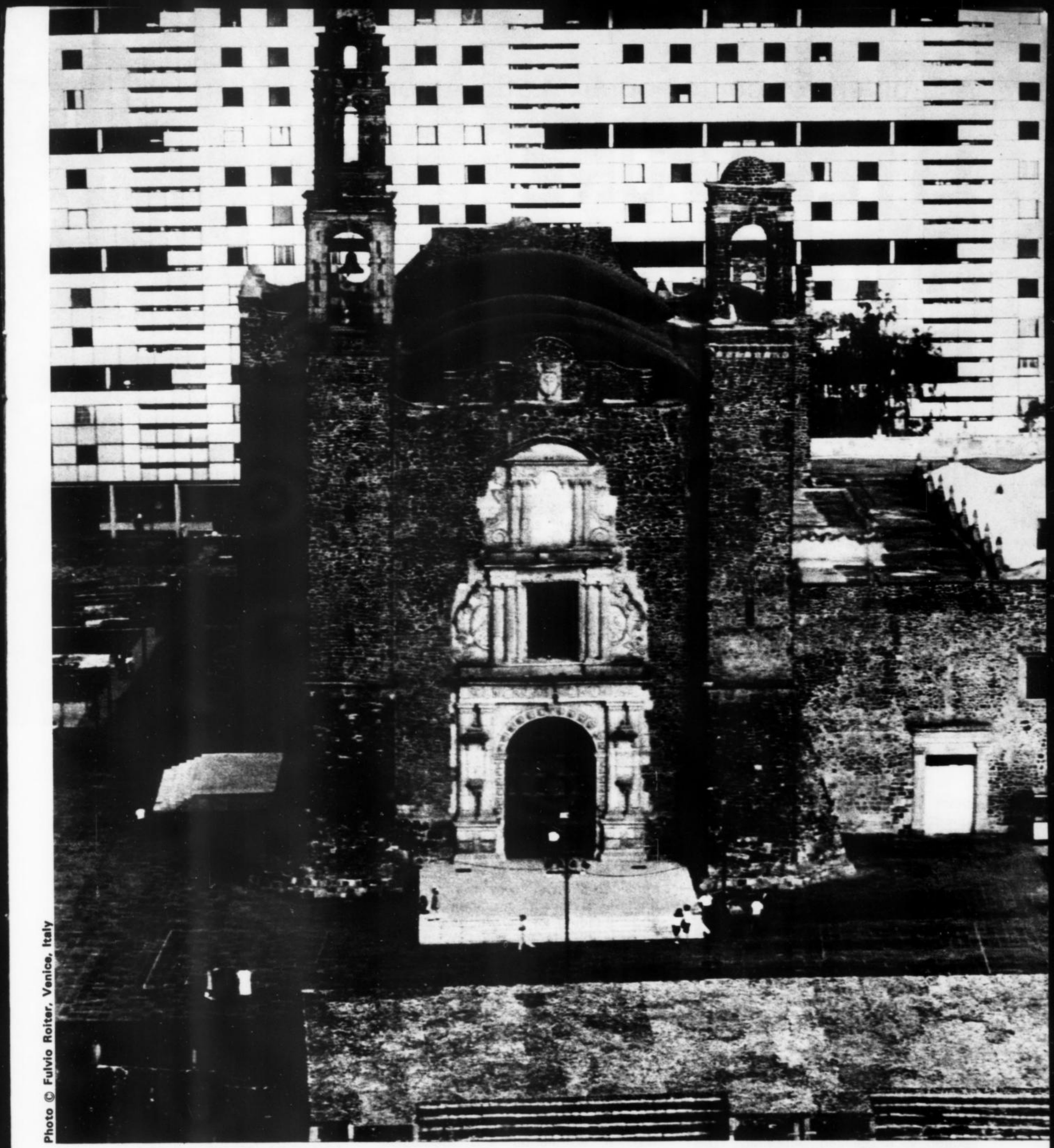

Photo © Fulvio Roiter, Venice, Italy

The "Square of Three Cultures" in Mexico City. Foreground, remains of an Aztec pyramid; centre, a 17th century Spanish church in Jesuit style; background, modern apartment blocks.

PLAZA OF THREE CULTURES IN MEXICO CITY

As the people of Ibero-America become conscious of their identity, they are scrutinizing themselves, their place in history and their rôle in the world of tomorrow. . .Ibero-America is, thus, now abandoning its ridiculous passion to be different from what it really is. The differences that exist between Ibero-America and the West no longer instil in us feelings of inferiority, but instead the deep sentiment of our own individuality and our own personality. . .Ibero-America's history reveals a double experience—the history of dominating peoples and of dominated people—a double experience often unknown to other peoples who have lived only the rôle of oppressor or the oppressed. This experience, if it is to bear fruit, must lead the peoples of Ibero-America to the healthy assimilation of the values of the different worlds between which it forms a bridge.

Léopold Zea (Mexico)

A problem of contemporary Latin America

LITERATURE AND UNDER-DEVELOPMENT

by Antonio Candido

Let us broaden our own spiritual horizons, so that all men shall be able to read and that each one of us shall have at his disposal the best possible tools with which to work for the good of all. Let us strive to come nearer to social justice and true liberty.

Pedro Henriquez Ureña (Dominican Republic)

Photo © Museo Nacional de Alfabetización, Havana, Cuba

Right, a forest of giant pencils at a literacy rally in Cuba. When Cuba launched a nationwide literacy campaign in 1961, 980,000 Cubans (23 per cent of the population) were illiterate. Within 12 months, 35,000 schoolteachers, 100,000 students and 13,000 workers organized in "Literacy Brigades" had taught over 700,000 persons to read and write. Literacy teaching campaigns in Latin America have reduced the overall illiteracy rate from 32.5 per cent to 23.6 per cent in ten years.

THE Brazilian writer Mario Vieira de Mello, one of the few Latin Americans to have dealt with the problem of the relationship between underdevelopment and culture, establishes a distinction that is valid for all Latin America.

According to him, a marked change of perspective has occurred. More or less up to the 1930s the notion of a "new land" prevailed among us, the notion of a land which had still not realized its potential but which believed itself to have great possibilities for future progress.

Nowadays, although there is no essential change in the distance which separated and still separates us from rich countries, the notion of an "underdeveloped country" prevails. The first notion stressed effort and, consequently, unrealized potential. The second stresses the poverty and atrophy of the present—what is lacking rather than what we possess in abundance.

I am not in agreement with the conclusions which Mario Vieira de Mello draws from that distinction; but considered on its own merit, the distinction is exact and helps in the understanding of certain fundamental aspects of literary creation in Latin America.

It is certain that the idea of a "new land" gives rise to certain fundamental attitudes in literature, attitudes derived from the admiration and interest aroused by the exotic, from a certain respect for grandeur and from hope in its possibilities.

Latin American intellectuals have inherited this enthusiasm and have transformed it into an instrument of national affirmation and ideological justification. Stimulated by Romanticism, backed up by hyperbole and with exoticism transformed into a state of mind, literature became the language of celebration and of tenderness. Our sky was bluer, our flowers prettier, our landscapes more inspiring than those of other places.

The idea of *nationhood* was closely linked to that of *nature* and to some extent derived its reason for existence from this. Both gave rise to a literature which compensated for material backwardness and the weakness of institutions by overvaluing the "regional" aspects and making exoticism the justification for social optimism.

But on the opposite side of the coin, the discouraging aspects depended on the same order of associations, as if weakness or the lack of institutional organization constituted an inconceivable paradox in the face of the grandeur of nature. (In America, everything is big, only man is small).

However, given the cause and effect relationship "beautiful land...great nation", it is not difficult to see the effects that the change of perspective that went with awareness of underdevelopment would have in bringing to the fore the reality of unproductive soil, technical backwardness, the overwhelming poverty of the people, their paralyzing lack of culture. This view was pessimistic with regard to the present and problematic in relation to the future.

Awareness of underdevelopment dates from after the Second World War, particularly from the 1950s onwards. But already in the 1930s, the change of direction had taken place especially in regional fiction which may be considered as a barometer.

This kind of narrative abandoned charm and curiosity, foreseeing and monitoring an element of masquerade

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ANTONIO CANDIDO, *Brazilian literary critic and writer, has specialized in Latin American literature and particularly Brazilian literature. He is professor of literature at the University of São Paulo, Brazil. Among his many books are "Ficção e Confessão" (Fiction and Confession, 1956), "Tese e Antitese" (Thesis and Antithesis, 1964), "Formação da Literatura Brasileira" (Evolution of Brazilian Literature, 1959) and "Introdução à Literatura do Brazil" (Introduction to Brazilian Literature).*

in the picturesque enchantment or in the decorative, gentlemanly way that rural man was portrayed. It is not inaccurate to say that, from this point of view, the novel came to be a demystifying force which anticipated the economist's and the politician's awareness of the problem.

If we consider the material conditions for the existence of literature, the basic factor is probably illiteracy which, in those countries where there had been advanced, pre-Columbian civilizations, is aggravated by the use of more than one language.

Illiteracy is, in fact, linked to other manifestations of cultural weakness: the lack of means of communication and distribution (publishing houses, libraries, magazines, newspapers); the scarcity, or the wide dispersion and the small size of the public for literature because of the reduced number of real readers (a much smaller number than the comparatively low percentage of literates); the impossibility for writers to specialize in their literary work which was usually pursued as a marginal activity or simply out of sheer passion for the craft; the lack of resistance or discrimination in the face of foreign influences and pressures. Economic and political factors enter into this weakness.

Illiteracy is not, in some cases, enough to explain weakness in other sectors, although it is the basic characteristic of underdevelopment in the cultural field.

In other sectors, a fact such as the development of publishing in the 1940s in Mexico and in Argentina showed that the lack of books was not simply a result of the reduced number of readers and their low buying power, since the whole of America, including the Portuguese-speaking regions, exhausted some quite big editions, especially those of high quality.

Perhaps it is possible to conclude that bad publishing habits and the lack of communication increased to the limit the inertia of the public; and that there had existed an unsatisfied potential for the marketing of books.

This last example reminds us that in Latin America the problem of public presents original characteristics, since it constitutes the only group of underdeveloped countries which speak European languages (if we except the indigenous groups), and which have also sprung culturally from metropolitan countries that are still underdeveloped today. In these old metropolitan countries, the consumption of literature is still restricted if we compare them to the developed countries.

It is possible to imagine that the Latin American writer might be doomed to remain forever what he has always been—a producer for a minority, although this does not mean that he produces for groups of high aesthetic level but simply for a restricted number with a liking for reading.

In effect, it must not be forgotten that modern audiovisual resources may produce such a change in the creative process and the means of communication that when the mass of the people finally attain elementary instruction, they will seek satisfaction for the universal need for fiction and poetry outside the printed book.

To put it in another way, in most of our countries, there are considerable masses of people who have still not reached the higher level of literature and are still submerged in the folklore stage of oral communication when, having become literate, they are caught up in the process of urbanization and fall under the influence of radio, television, comic strips and popular magazines which form the basis of mass culture.

Hence the number of readers of literature, as we understand it here, does not increase proportionately with the growth of literacy, for literates and illiterates alike progress directly from the stage of folklore to that type of urban folklore which is mass culture.

Besides, this problem is one of the most serious in the underdeveloped countries because of the broad pene-

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE

tration of what might be called cultural "know-how" and the prefabricated materials of mass culture which come from the developed countries. This know-how and mass culture not only spreads the values of the industrially developed countries but also enables them to direct, in their own interests, the sensibility and opinion of the populations of the underdeveloped countries.

Illiteracy and cultural weakness not only influence the external aspects. Their influence on the very conscience of the writer and on the nature of his creation is even more significant.

In one period, the writer shared the ideology of enlightenment, according to which education would automatically bring about conditions favourable to the full development of man and his progress in society.

At the outset, education was reserved for a minority of citizens who enjoyed economic and political advantages; later, it was envisaged as a distant, vague possibility for the people who were viewed less as a reality than as a liberal concept. The Emperor Pedro II of Brazil declared that he would rather have been a teacher, an attitude similar to that of the Argentinean, Sarmiento, who believed that the triumph of civilization over barbarism would have as its premise potential urbanization based on education.

A curious case is that of the Brazilian thinker, Manuel Bonfim, who in 1905 published a fascinating book, *Latin America*. Bonfim analyzes our backwardness as a function of the persistence of a colonial status, as revealed in the continued existence of oligarchies and foreign imperialism. Finally, when he seems to be leading up to a theory of the transformation of social structures as a necessary precondition, a disappointing strangulation of his argument takes place and Bonfim ends by prescribing education as the panacea. We here sense that we are at the nub of the "enlightenment illusion".

In consequence, the intellectuals created a vision that was just as distorted when confronted with the prevailing lack of culture. Whilst lamenting the ignorance of the people and wishing that this might disappear, so that their countries might automatically rise up to the high level destined for them, they excluded themselves from the context and considered themselves an isolated, truly "fluctuating" group. And, in effect, they floated, with or without consciousness of guilt, above the lack of culture and the backwardness, certain that these could not contaminate or affect the quality of what they were doing.

In point of fact, the general lack of culture produced and still produces an even more far-reaching weakness which affects intellectual life and the very quality of literary works.

Cultural poverty necessarily subjected the writer to metropolitan models and to European models in general, establishing an elite grouping which was to some extent aristocratic in relation to the uncultured public. In effect, insofar as a sufficient local public did not exist, the writer wrote as if his ideal public existed in Europe and so, very often, disassociated himself from his own land. This gave rise to works which authors and readers considered highly refined, because they assimilated the form and values of Europe.

Another aspect of this alienating "aristocratic" attitude worth recalling is the use of foreign languages in creative writing, which then appeared a laudable refinement. Some extreme examples underline the paradoxical and comic side of this literary vogue. One instance is that of the fifth-rate Brazilian Romantic, Pires de Almeida who, at the beginning of the century, published in French a theatrical work probably written much earlier: *La Fête des Crânes: drame de mœurs indiennes en trois actes et douze tableaux.* (The Ceremony of Skulls: a drama of Indian customs in 3 acts and 12 tableaux.)

All this did not take place without some ambivalence since, on the one hand, the elite imitated the good and bad of Europe, and at one and the same time affirmed the most intransigent spiritual independence, in a pendulum movement between reality and their ideological Utopia. Thus we see that illiteracy and refinement, cosmopolitanism and regionalism may have their roots in the soil of cultural deprivation as well as in the effort to overcome this.

An interesting problem from the point of view of the dependence which arises from cultural backwardness is that of various types of influence, good or bad, inevitable and unnecessary.

Our literatures (like those of North America) are basically branches of metropolitan literatures. And if we set aside susceptibilities of national pride, we shall see that despite the independence from these which they achieved little by little, they are still largely their reflections.

In the case of the numerically superior Spanish and Portuguese countries, the independence process consisted, to a great extent, in the transfer of dependence so that from the nineteenth century onwards, other non-metropolitan literatures, especially French, became the models, something which also occurred in the old metropolitan countries. At the present time, it is essential to take North American literature into account as a new focus of attraction.

This is what might be called inevitable influence and is sociologically linked to our dependence from the moment of the Conquest and the sometimes brutal transplantation of cultures.

Many consider Spanish American "Modernism" as a species of rite of

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THE URBAN EXPLOSION

In the 19th and beginning of the 20th century, Latin American novels were marked by a special emphasis on regionalism and rural settings. Recent years have witnessed a new flowering of Latin American Literature enriched by psychological studies of the complexities and problems of city life. (Photo shows a typical street in downtown Buenos Aires.) This development reflects the mushroom growth of cities throughout the Latin American continent. The novels and short stories now emerging in Spanish and Portuguese-speaking America have been hailed as amongst the most vigorous and original in the growing world literature of today.

GRANDEUR OF NATURE

The almost lunar quality of this landscape in Chilean Patagonia is in violent contrast with the impenetrable virgin forests, the vast plains and "sertões", the impregnable cordilleras and the imposing rivers found elsewhere in Latin America. The grandeur of nature is one of the major themes of Latin American literature and art.

Photo © Mario Muchnik, Buenos Aires

MYTH AND REALITY

"Magical reality", says the Cuban writer Alejo Carpentier, "is the heritage of all America... America is nowhere near exhausting the founts of its mythology." Its presence is in evidence in many of the literary and artistic creations the continent has produced. In this oil painting by the Cuban artist Wilfredo Lam, entitled "The Abalochas dance for Chango", various elements of Afro-Cuban mythology—the spirit of fertility, the spirit of resurrection, the god of war—evoke the vision of a tropical forest.

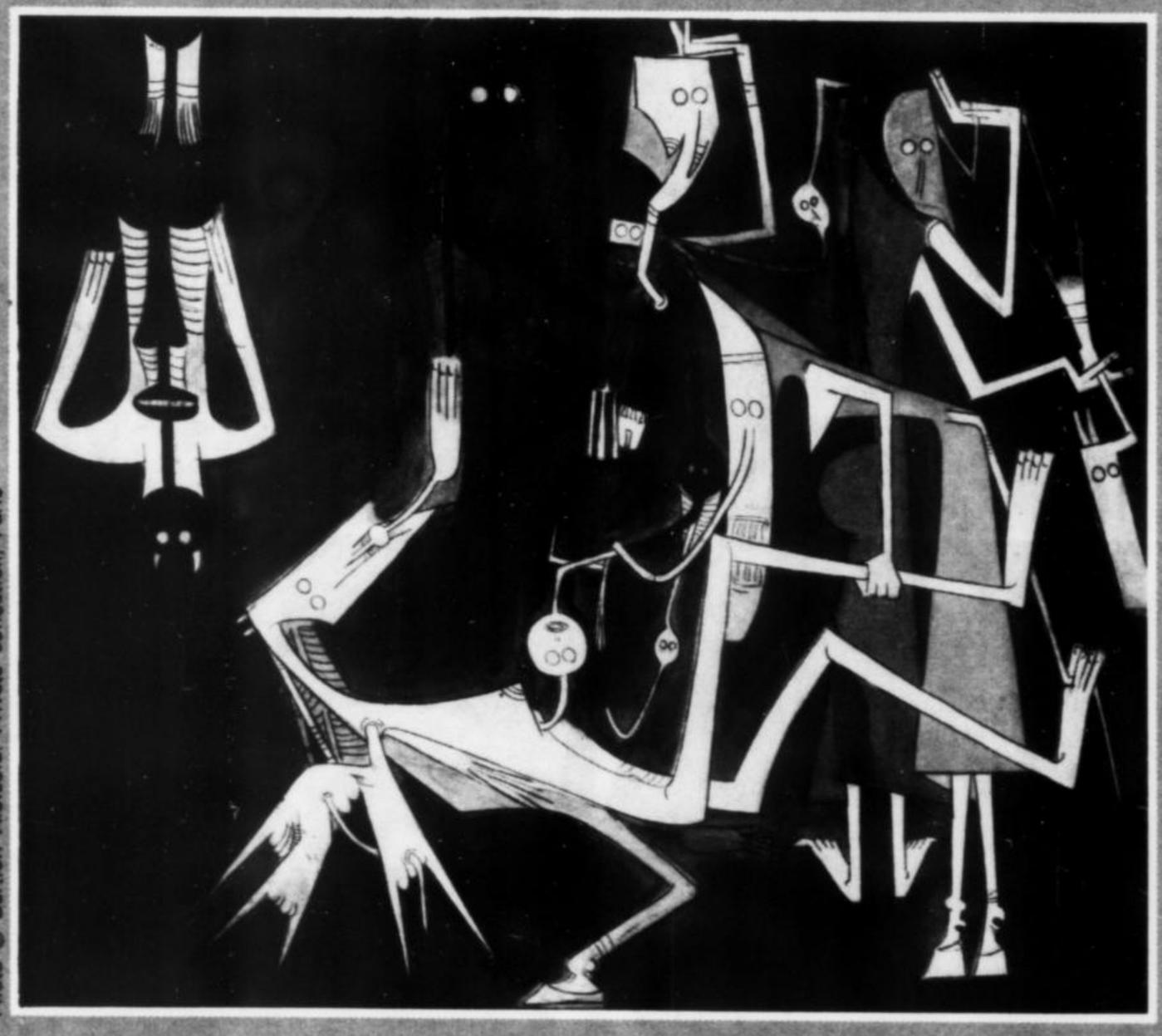

Photo © Bertioli Albisola, Private collection, Paris

MAJOR THEMES OF ARTISTIC CREATION

We, who are writers from the vast expanses of America, are constantly on the alert to fill these open spaces with living persons of real flesh and blood. Not only are we conscious of this creative need, we also see our duty to raise a critical voice in this empty world, which despite its emptiness is no less filled with injustices, deprivations and suffering. Furthermore, we feel equally bound to rekindle the ancient dreams that have long slumbered in our statues of stone, in the ruins of our ancient monuments, in the infinite silence of our planetary pampas, our thick forests, our rivers echoing the din of thunder. For we must people with words the confines of a silent continent with the thrill that comes from the intoxicating task of creating myths and putting names to things.

Pablo Neruda (Chile)

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Photo © Roberto Montandôn - University of Chile, Santiago

Right, detail of lavish baroque decoration in the church of San Martin Tepotzotlan, Mexico.

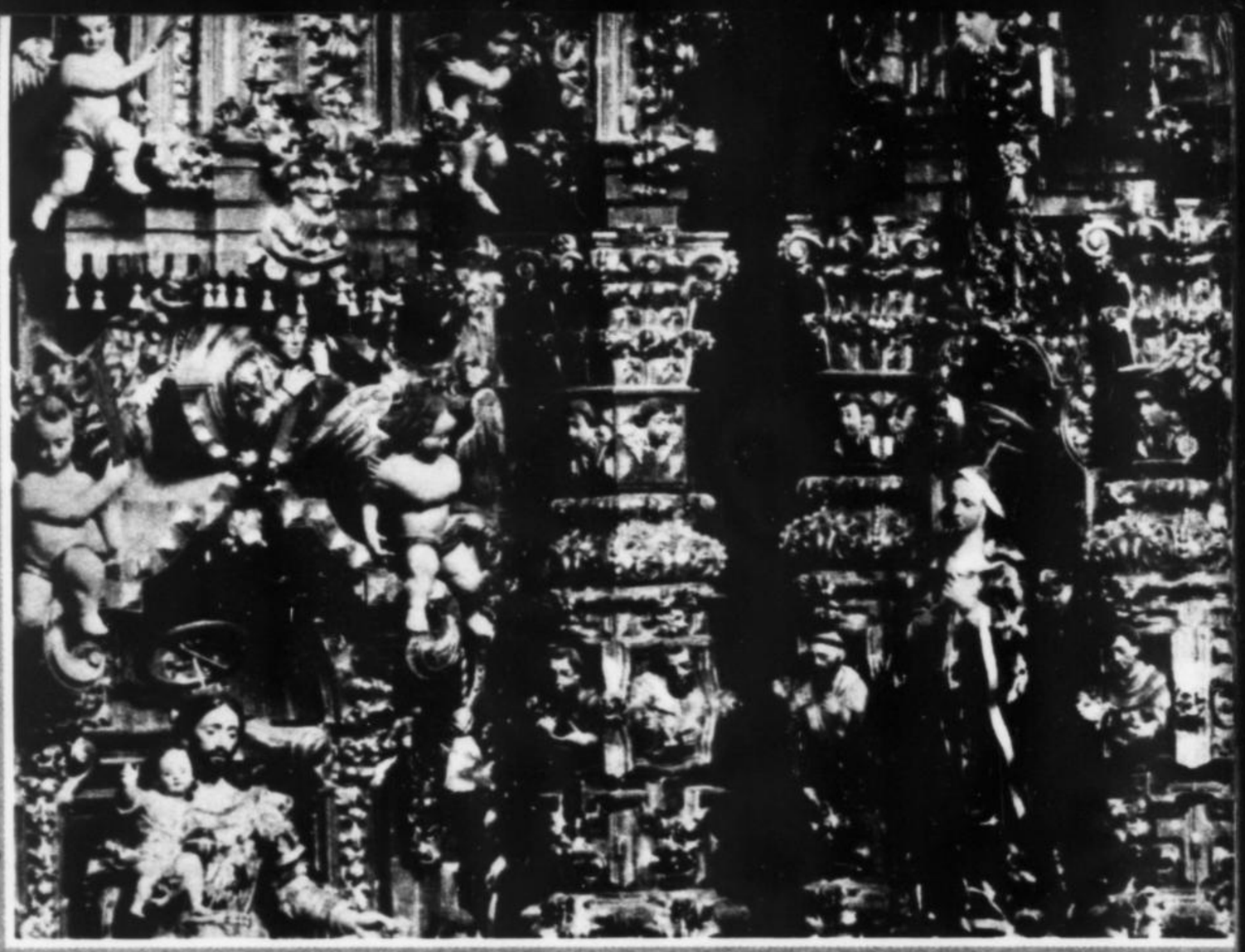


Photo © Fulvio Roiter, Venice

BAROQUE

Our art has always been baroque —from the magnificent pre-Columbian sculpture and pictorial art of the "Codices" to the best novels of present-day Latin America, not to mention the cathedrals and monasteries of the colonial era. Why be afraid of the baroque style, born of trees, of reredos and altars, of over-ornate statues and calligraphic portraits, a baroque born of the need to put names to things, even if in so doing we move away from more fashionable techniques.

Alejo Carpəntier (Cuba)

Photo © F.F.C.C. Collection, Paris

Photo below shows an Afro-Brazilian vendor in a street of Bahia, north-eastern Brazil. Africa's contribution to the culture of Latin America has been particularly strong, not only in Brazil, but in Cuba and other islands of the Caribbean, as well as in Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Mexico and various parts of Central America.

Photo © Urs F. Kluyver, Hamburg

The life and problems of the Aimaraes Indians of Lake Titicaca in Bolivia are vividly portrayed in a recent film, "Ukamau" (above) directed by Jorge Sanjinés of Bolivia. Latin America's cinema has been gaining increasing prominence on the international scene with films dealing with poignant social and human problems of today.

THE PLIGHT OF THE INDIANS

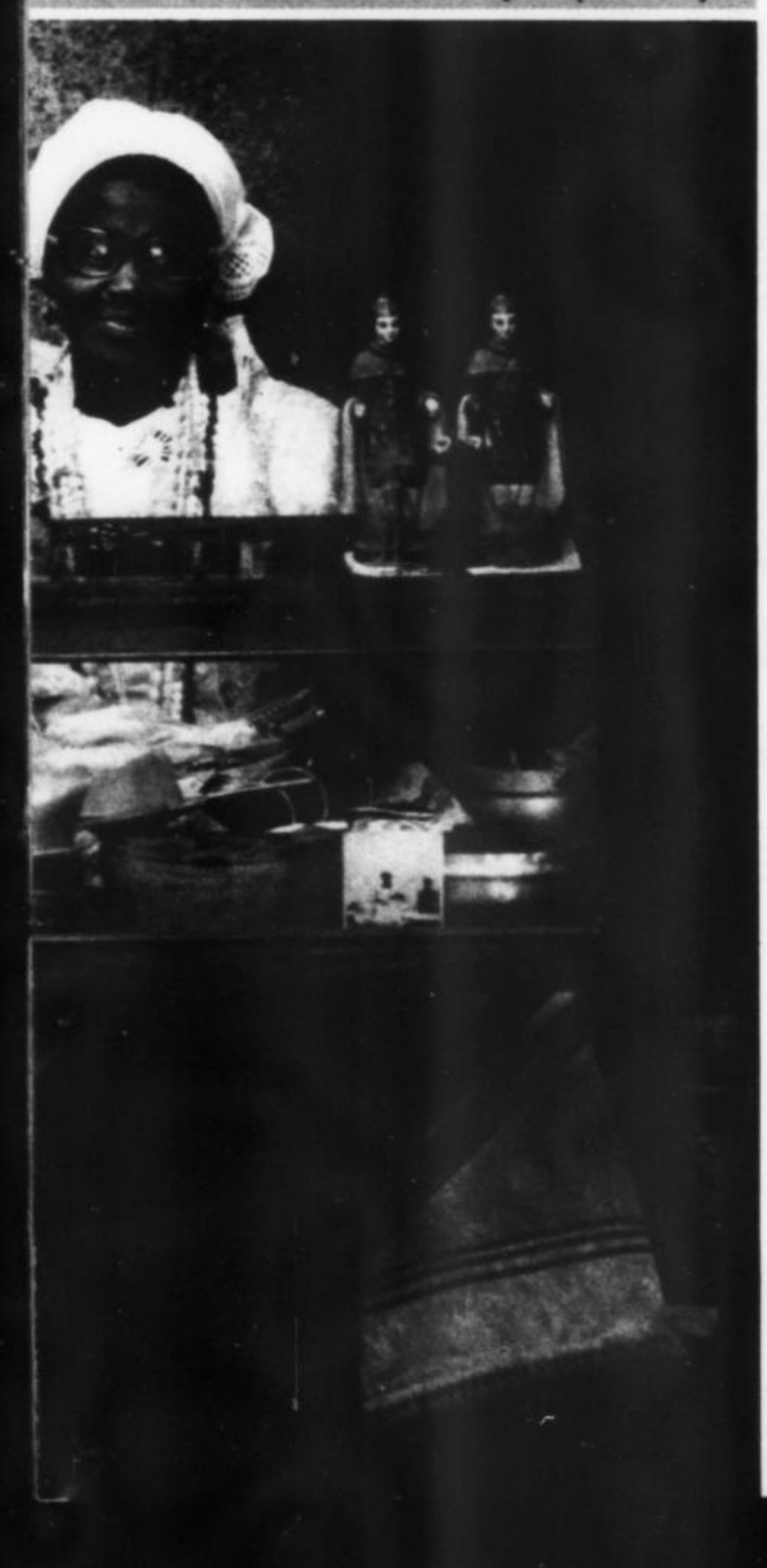
The Indian is no mere figure of history or archaeology; he is alive and present, part of us...it is neither right nor reasonable or indeed worthy of us to exclude from our traditions that part which we see every day around us in our songs and dances, in our books, in the street, which flows in our veins and in the hearts of all our fellow men.

Andrés Iduarte (Mexico)

AFRICAN ROOTS

African culture in Brazil is far from a mere museum or anthropological curiosity. It is not merely picturesque but a living, creative reality. Brazilian culture is noted more for its extra-European traits than for its passively colonial sub-European characteristics. And much of what contributes to this Brazilian culture comes from the fact that the Negro has had an opportunity to express himself as a Brazilian and not as an intruder either ethnically or culturally.

Gilberto Freyre (Brazil)



passage which, because of its capacity for originality, marks our literary coming of age. Nevertheless, if we correct the perspective and define the fields, we shall perhaps see that this is truer as a psychological fact than as an aesthetic reality.

It is true that Rubén Darío, and later the whole movement, turned back for the first time the current of influences, carrying that of America to Spain; this was a break in the literary dominion which the latter had exercised.

But the fact is that such a movement did not stem from original resources of expression but from the adaptation of French attitudes and processes. What the Spaniards received was the influence of France, already filtered and translated by Latin Americans who, in this way, took their place as cultural mediators.

A fundamental stage in the overcoming of dependence is the ability to produce first-rate works, influenced not by foreign models but by previous national works.

Thus, it is possible to say that the Argentinean, Jorge Luis Borges, represents the first indisputable original influence exercised in a general and recognizable manner upon the originating countries because of his new way of understanding the process of writing.

The case of the avant-garde of the 1920s is interesting since they represent an extraordinary liberation in expressive techniques. The Chilean poet, Vicente Huidobro, founds "creationism" in Paris, inspired by the French and the Italians. He writes his poetry in French and in French explains his poetic principles in magazines such as *L'Esprit Nouveau*.

Argentinean "Ultraism" and Brazilian "Modernism" stem directly from the same sources. And all that does not prevent these movements from making innovations, nor their originators from being the creators, par excellence, of our new literature; besides Huidobro and Borges, they include the Brazilians, Mario de Andrade, Oswald de Andrade and Manuel Bandeira.

We know, then, that we are part of a greater culture in which we participate as a variant. That is, contrary to what our grandparents ingenuously supposed, it is an illusion to speak of suppression of contacts and influences. At a time when the world tendency is interrelation and interaction, the Utopias of originality no longer persist in a national sense though they are understandable in the phase of newly-formed nations.

In the present stage of awareness of underdevelopment, the question is, therefore, more complex. Is there a paradox here? In effect, the more he realizes the tragic reality of underdevelopment, the more free and thinking man believes in the need to reject the foreign economic yoke and to modify the internal structures which contribute to the underdeveloped situation.

Nevertheless, he sees the problem of influences with more objectivity, considering them as cultural and social links. So much so that awareness of this link coincides with the beginning of an ability to make innovations on the level of expression and with struggle on the level of economic and political development.

On the other hand, the traditional affirmation of originality, in the sense of elementary particularism, led and still leads, on the one hand to the picturesque and on the other to cultural slavery—two sicknesses of growth which are perhaps inevitable but, in any case are alienating.

Because of the aesthetic movements of the 1920s and the intense aesthetic and social awareness of more recent years, we began to feel that dependence was moving towards cultural interdependence. This will not only give Latin American writers the awareness of their unity in diversity but will also favour the fruition of more mature, original works which will gradually be assimilated by other peoples, including those of the metropolitan countries. The road of reflection upon the problem of underdevelopment leads, in the cultural field, to transnational integration, as what was imitation is slowly transformed into reciprocal assimilation.

One example among many. In the work of the Peruvian, Mario Vargas Llosa, especially *La ciudad y los perros* (The Time of the Heroes), the tradition of the stream of consciousness appeared in an extraordinarily refined form, and is a technique that belonged to Proust and Joyce as well as to Dorothy Richardson, Virginia Woolf, to Döblin and Faulkner.

Here the novelist of an underdeveloped country used ingredients which came as a cultural borrowing from the countries which produced the original literary forms. Nevertheless, he adjusted them in depth to his own purpose in order to represent the problems of his country and invented his own personal formulae. In this case, there is neither imitation nor mechanical reproduction. There is a sharing of resources which have become common property through the situation of dependence, thus contributing to making this a situation of interdependence.

It appears that one of the positive characteristics of the underdeveloped period is the overcoming of the attitude of suspicion which leads to the indiscriminate acceptance or to the illusion of any originality limited exclusively to local themes.

In Cuba, can one really speak of artifice or evasion in the case of Alejo Carpentier, whose work is impregnated with surrealism, and whose vision is a complex trans-national vision even with regard to the theme of a novel like *El siglo de las luces* (Explosion in the Cathedral)?

In Brazil, the recent concrete poetry movement takes its inspiration from Ezra Pound and its aesthetic principles

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Photo © Fulvio Roiter, Venice

"The Fight for Liberty", a huge mural by José Clemente Orozco (1883-1949), dominates the stairway of the Government Palace at Guadalajara, Mexico. The dramatic figure towering in the centre of the mural is the Mexican revolutionary priest Miguel Hidalgo who, in 1810, at the village of Dolores, made his famous call for independence which was to spark off the Mexican war of liberation. This work is typical of the Mexican muralist movement, whose most outstanding representatives are Orozco, Diego Rivera and David Alfaro Siqueiros.

PATHWAYS TO A NEW ART

by Jean Franco

IT has become increasingly difficult in the modern world to talk of national or continental differences in art, since national frontiers have broken down and an international style predominates. Further, it is often as easy to see a painting by Fernand Léger of France, in Caracas as one by the Chilean, Roberto Matta, in Paris or a Botero (of Colombia) in New York. Yet, despite this growing internationalism, Latin American art is unique in that it represents a confluence of indigenous, Western European and North American styles.

The indigenous styles are those which derive from pre-Columbian sculpture, ceramics and painting, which have provided a powerful source of inspiration to certain contemporary painters and sculptors.

At the same time, Latin American art is also closely linked to Western and North American art from which it has derived styles such as Impressionism, Cubism, Expressionism, Abstractionism, Surrealism, Pop and Op art. Even a movement like the Mexican muralist movement, which had a strong nativist and genre element, was influenced by Italian fresco painting of the Renaissance, by Cubism, Expressionism and even Surrealism.

But perhaps what most clearly distinguishes Latin American art are the sociological factors, especially those which concern the artist's relation to his society. In many countries, government patronage has been more important than private patronage. This was certainly the case in Mexico in the nineteen-twenties; it is the case in present-day Cuba where private patronage has virtually disappeared.

Yet even in countries like Brazil or Venezuela where there is substantial private patronage, or very small countries like Guatemala, the government has commissioned the decoration of public buildings, the construction of University cities or even entire cities of the future like Brasilia.

The Mexican case is particularly interesting since Mexico was the first Latin American country to stimulate the creation of a "national art" as part of a deliberate project in order to give the people a sense of identity in the post-Revolutionary era (that is, after 1917).

On the other hand, private patronage for Latin American art is a recent phenomenon. As in literature, nineteenth-century art was predominantly European or European-inspired. Wealthy Latin Americans bought their paintings in Paris; public monuments in squares or parks were commissioned from European artists. The first academies in Latin America established after Independence were run by French or Italian painters. The miracle is that a few native painters of genius (such as José María Velasco, 1840-1912, of

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JEAN FRANCO *has written extensively on Latin American culture generally, and in particular the art and literature of Latin America. Professor of Latin American Literature at the University of Essex, England, she is Chairman of the Society for Latin American Studies of Great Britain. She is the author of "The Modern Culture of Latin America: Society and the Artist" (revised paperback edition, Penguin Books, U.K., 1970) and "An Introduction to Spanish American Literature" (1969), and the editor of "Short Stories in Spanish" (Penguin, 1966).*

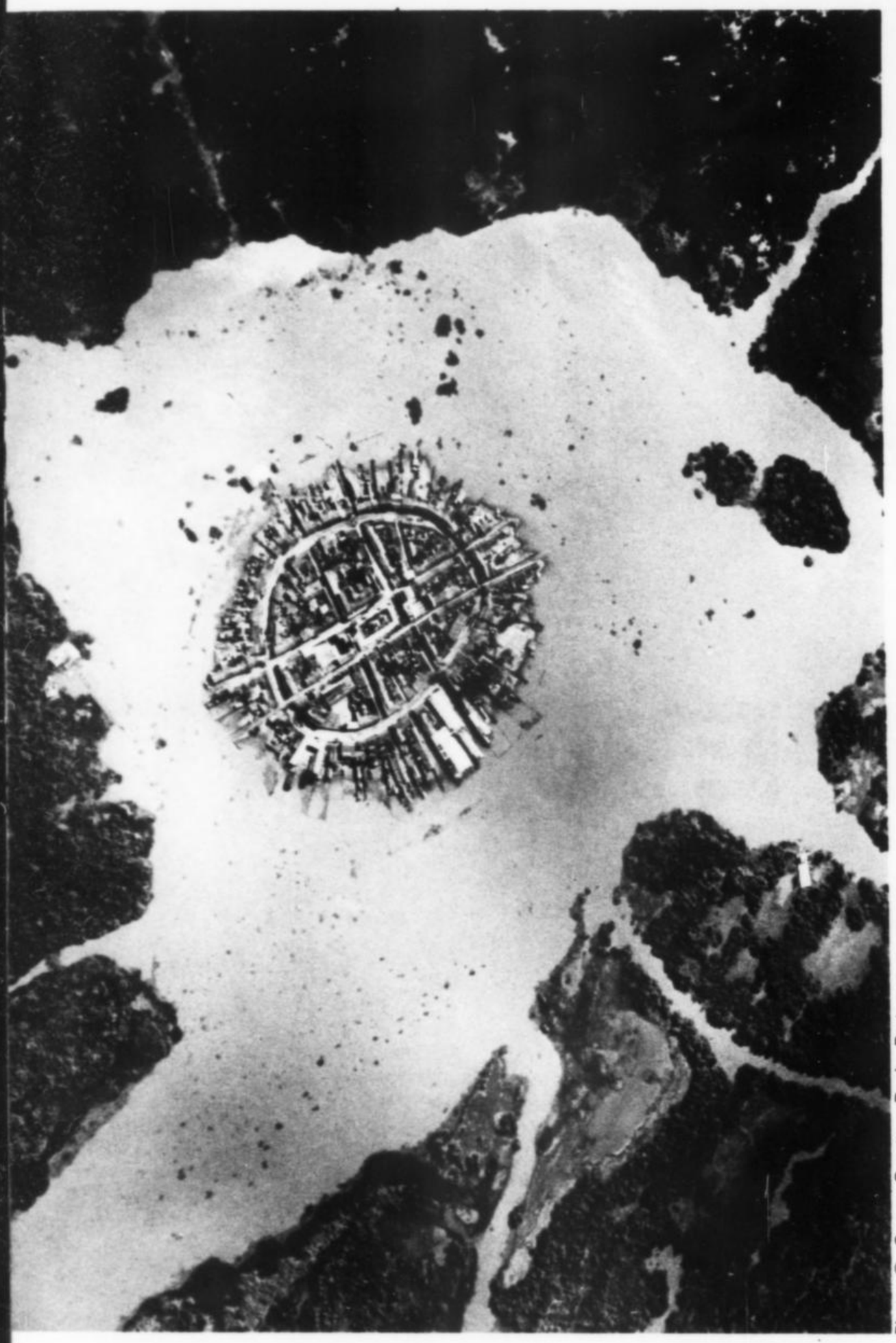


Photo © Georg Gerster, Rapho-Paris

The lake island of Mexcaltitan, in northwestern Mexico (left), con fishermen, is an interesting example of "spontaneous urbanism" whe within the framework of a circular island. Above, today's urban de circular shape to the "pilot city" of Jupiá, in Brazil. The city was project at Urubupungá, on the Parana river, and houses 12,000 dan

The Square of San Francisco, below, in Quito, Ecuador, is a good example of the great influence of Spanish colonial architecture, adapted to the wide-open spaces of the Andean landscape. In foreground, can be seen the lovely forecourt of the Church of San Francisco built in the 17th century.

Photo Paolo Gasparini - Unesco

Photo Paolo Gasparini - Unesco

ORIGINALITY AND CONTRAST IN LATIN AMERICAN ARCHITECTURE

The architecture of Latin America has a long tradition of originality going back to pre-Columbian times with the pyramids of the Aztecs and Mayas, the fortresses of Sachsahuaman at Cuzco and the architectural ensemble at Machu Picchu, in Peru, to cite only three famous examples. The Colonial period, lasting several hundred years and inspired by Spanish and Portuguese concepts, produced a new style of Latin American baroque churches, palaces and squares. Today's architects of Latin America, too, at the same time as they have studied and assimilated the major trends of 20th century architecture in the world, have sought new and often revolutionary solutions to town planning (as in Brasilia) and urban architecture (as in Rio de Janeiro, Mexico City, Caracas and many other cities of Latin America). Just as avant-garde Japanese architecture has its deep roots in Japan's countryside and traditions, so too have Latin America's young architects sought to integrate their new forms and concepts with the more traditional models of Latin America's past.

Photo © Georg Gerster - Rapho, Paris

, completely covered by a village of shrimp where the entire community has been built an designers have given the same "modern" was built near Brazil's largest hydro-electric 0 dam construction workers and their families.

For the ceiling of this concert hall at the Luis Angel Arango Library, Bogotá, Colombia (right), the architect, Germán Samper, used the most advanced architectural and acoustical techniques.

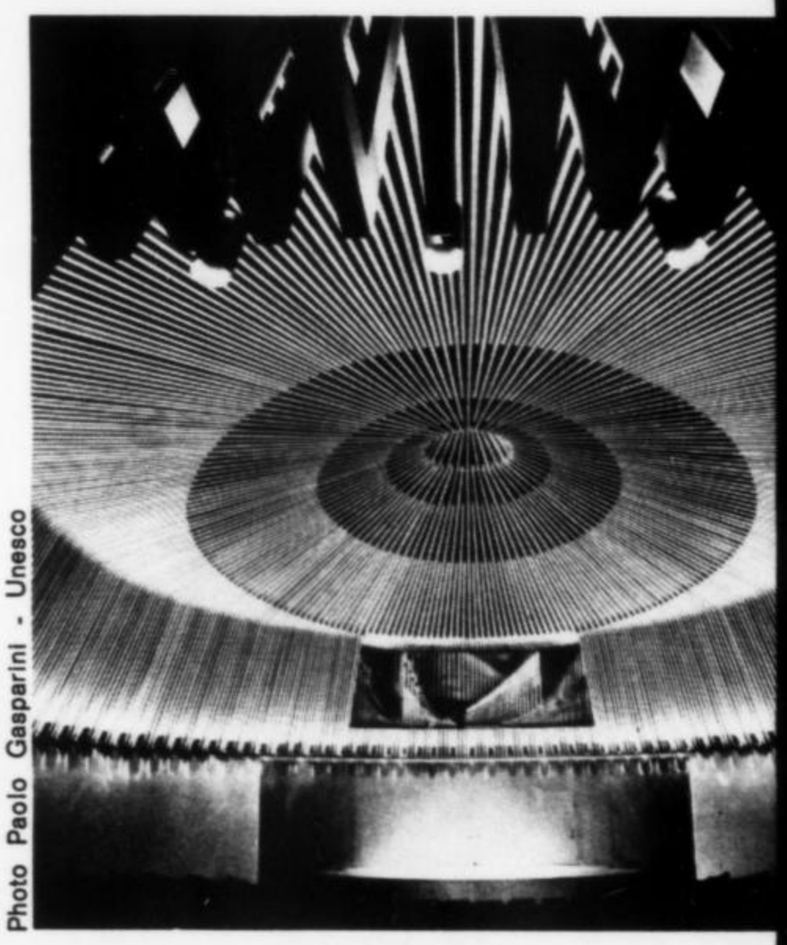
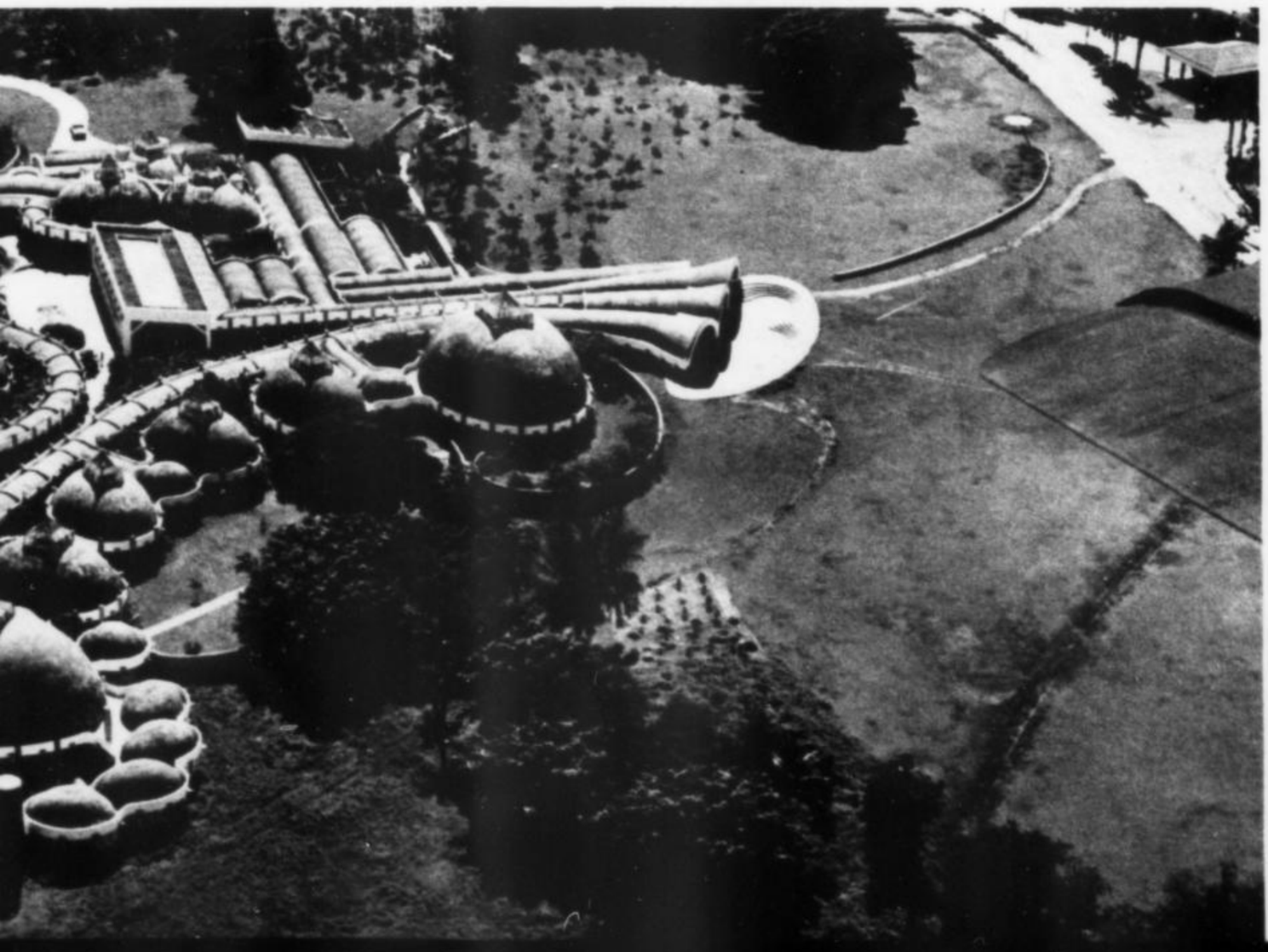


Photo Paolo Gasparini - Unesco

Below, the School of Plastic Arts, at Cubanacán, near Havana, built between 1962 and 1965 and designed by the Cuban architect Ricardo Porro. A complex of domed structures and vaulted passages, the architectural ensemble has been hailed for its originality and the ingenious way in which the different elements fit into the surroundings.



Modern tradition is a tradition of dissent... In Latin America the avant-garde violently rejects the immediate past. But in reality it is a circular process: the search for the future always results in a re-conquest of the past. Tradition too is a creation of modernism. In other words, modernism constructs its past with the same violence that it builds its future.

Octavio Paz (Mexico)

(Continued from page 17)

Mexico) were able to develop in an original way.

This imitation of foreign models, common to all the arts in Latin America, was the inevitable consequence of the continent's semi-colonial status. The taste of potential patrons was formed in Paris and they took little interest in native talent before the nineteen-twenties.

Yet all around them existed extraordinary native riches—some archaeological, like the pre-Columbian ceremonial centres in the Andes or Central America; or the baroque sculpture and painting of the colonial period; in the rural areas could be seen the most diverse and exciting examples of folk art, a folk art that is often genuinely "mestizo" since it combines Hispanic and Indian motifs.

Even today, the rural markets, especially in the Andean countries, in Mexico and Central America, offer fine examples of folk painting, ceramic sculpture, wood-carving, weaving and pottery. Yet it was not until after the Mexican Revolution that Latin Americans began seriously to challenge the norms of Western art and recognize the value of their own traditions whether of the past or whether belonging to folk art.

The vigour of popular tradition is nowhere more apparent than in the engravings of the Mexican, José Guadalupe Posada (1852-1913), whose satirical works directly inspired the Mexican muralist movement and, indeed, a whole school of modern engraving.

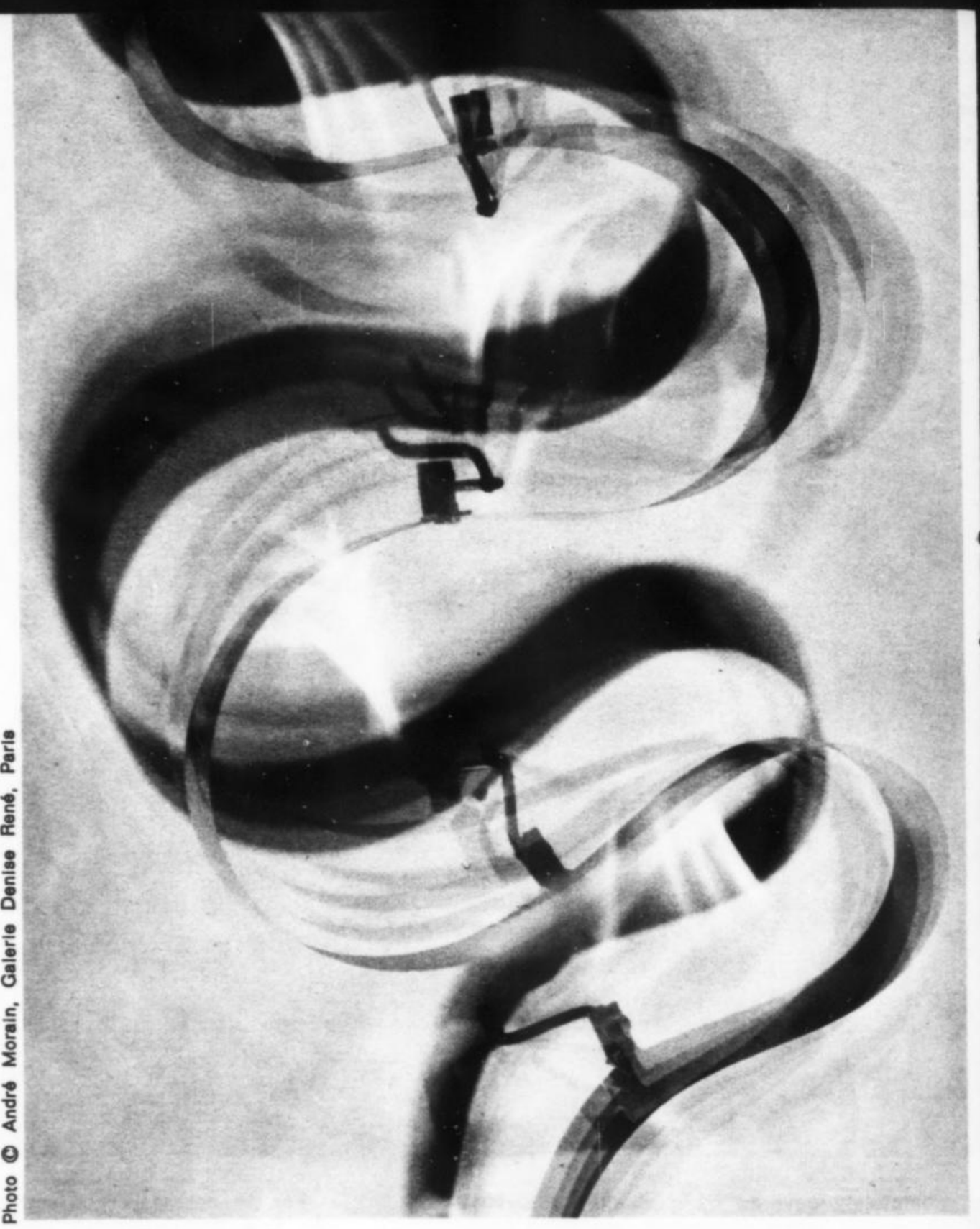


Photo © André Morain, Galerie Denise René, Paris

Posada drew on a purely folk tradition—on the macabre humour of the skeleton figures which are sold in Mexico to celebrate the Day of the Dead as semi-comic *mementi mori*. Posada decked out his skeleton figures with the elegant hats and clothes of pre-Revolutionary upper-class Mexicans and so converted the popular motif into social satire.

But it was the Mexican Revolution (1910-1917) which really stimulated both an interest in popular art and new directions in painting and sculpture. Artists such as Dr. Atl and Siqueiros not only helped to introduce the revolutionary concept of mural painting but also fought in the Revolution itself. When the fighting was over, the Minister of Education in one of the post-Revolutionary governments, José Vasconcelos, commissioned murals for the walls of the National Preparatory School and other public buildings.

Moral and didactic in purpose, the muralist movement soon attracted the three greatest talents of the period: José Clemente Orozco (1883-1949), Diego Rivera (1887-1957) and David Alfaro Siqueiros (1898). Oddly, perhaps ironically (considering the anti-U.S. temper of the time), all of these painters were as popular in the United States as in their own country, and all painted murals there—Orozco in Pomona College, Claremont, California, in the New School for Social Research, New York, and at Dartmouth College; Rivera in the San Francisco Stock Exchange and the Rockefeller Center and the Detroit Institute; Siqueiros in Los Angeles at the Plaza Art Center.

Although often linked together as the main figures of the muralist movement, the three painters are in fact very different. Orozco's work has an explosive energy and violence though he never sacrificed technique to message. Many of his paintings are, however, allegorical and many are satirical and moral, attacking the corrupt rich.

The murals he executed in Guadalajara in the nineteen-thirties represent the peak of his achievement, those executed in the Government Palace being powerfully satirical, and those in the Hospicio Cabañas being allegorical. Here he painted his masterpiece on the theme of the four elements. Three reclining figures, depicting Earth, Water and Air, surround Fire, a mural which fills the dome of the edifice and shows flames circling a human figure. The mural is an excellent example of Orozco's vigorous, dramatic and passionate style.

By contrast, Rivera's murals were lyrical, particularly in the 1920s when he decorated the walls of the Agricultural School of Chapingo with the story of man's social development. One of his most important murals, however, is the one he executed in the National Palace in Mexico City, where he painted the conquest and the oppression of the Indian.

A painter whose colour and lines can be tender and gentle, he often turned to caricature in order to depict the Spanish conquerors or the idle rich (as in a famous mural in the Hotel Prado, Mexico City, which for many years remained covered up).

The third of the trio of muralists, David Alfaro Siqueiros, has often declared that he considers easel paintings secondary to mural painting, mere experiments for the larger work. Nevertheless, he has painted a considerable number of canvases, many of them of a high quality.

Siqueiros' work is noted for its monumentality; he often uses great shapes and likes to produce effects of explosion, disruption or sinewy strength. He has been one of the most experimental of the muralists in his search for new materials. Because of his belief that painting is a form of production, he has not hesitated to adopt industrial techniques such as the use of the spray gun.

The Mexican muralist movement was the first Latin American art movement to spread its influence beyond the national boundaries and it helped to stimulate public commissions for murals in other countries, and even in the U.S.A. during the "New Deal" period. Because of the strong "back to the roots" tendency, encouraged by post-Revolutionary nationalism, it also revived figurative painting in which there was a tendency to idealize workers or peasants.

We find similar tendencies, however, even in countries which had not passed through a Revolutionary situation. In Ecuador, Oswaldo Guayasamín followed on the tradition of Mexican muralism, although much of his work consisted of easel painting. In Brazil, Cándido Portinari who, like Siqueiros, painted strong figures of workers pursuing their daily tasks, was, in fact, influenced by contemporary European art, particularly by Picasso's "monumental" period.

The Cuban Revolution, like the Mexican Revolution, encouraged art to move away from easel painting towards forms more readily accessible to the people. Before the Revolution in 1959, Cuban art, whilst strongly influenced by European (especially French) art, was amongst the best in Latin America. Among its avant-garde were Victor Manuel, Amalia Peláez, whose Matisse-like figures and designs showed a remarkable use of colour, Portocarrero, who was influenced by Futurism and Constructivism and Wilfredo Lam, a painter who used motifs from Cuban African cults in his works.

Almost all of these painters, though they did not alter their styles after the Revolution, began to work for a larger public. They painted large canvases for public buildings, designed biscuit tins or posters. Indeed, it is in the field of poster and book design that contemporary Cuban painters and artists have reached a mass public.

Quite a different path was followed by painters and sculptors in most other countries of Latin America where a high value was placed on technique and less importance was attached to reaching a mass public. The pioneers here were the Brazilians who, in 1922, held a Modern Art Week in São Paulo. This encouraged a number of painters, influenced by Fauvism and Futurism.

But soon quite original trends developed. With Tarsilo de Amaral (1894), there developed the delightful Antropofagia (Cannibalistic) movement, a kind of Brazilian response to European myths about tropical America. The Modern Art Week put São Paulo on the cultural map and this city later became the home of the Biennale exhibition.

Another Latin American offshoot of Modernism was Constructivism whose main exponent was the Uruguayan artist, Torres-García for whom the essence of art was "to construct according to the law of limitations."

As is the case with the literary movement often known as "magical realism", surrealism and certain other European movements served to encourage Latin Americans to achieve a new vision of their own continent. This was true even in Mexico where along with the muralist movement, there flourished painters such as Rufino Tamayo (1899) who developed a totally personal art, initially influenced by Picasso.

Although Tamayo spent some years in New York and was recognized in the United States before he was recognized in Mexico, his colours and elements are wholly Mexican without

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KINETIC ART SOCIAL SATIRE

Two examples of opposing tendencies in contemporary Latin American art. Left, a construction in synthetic materials entitled "Twisted Shape" by the Argentinian kinetic artist Julio Le Parc, a prizewinner at the 1966 Venice Biennale. Right, "The Presidential Family", by the Colombian artist Fernando Botero, a burlesque social satire in which realistic representation is deliberately avoided.

Photo © Collection Warren D. Benedek

Photo © Pavio Hofer, Venice

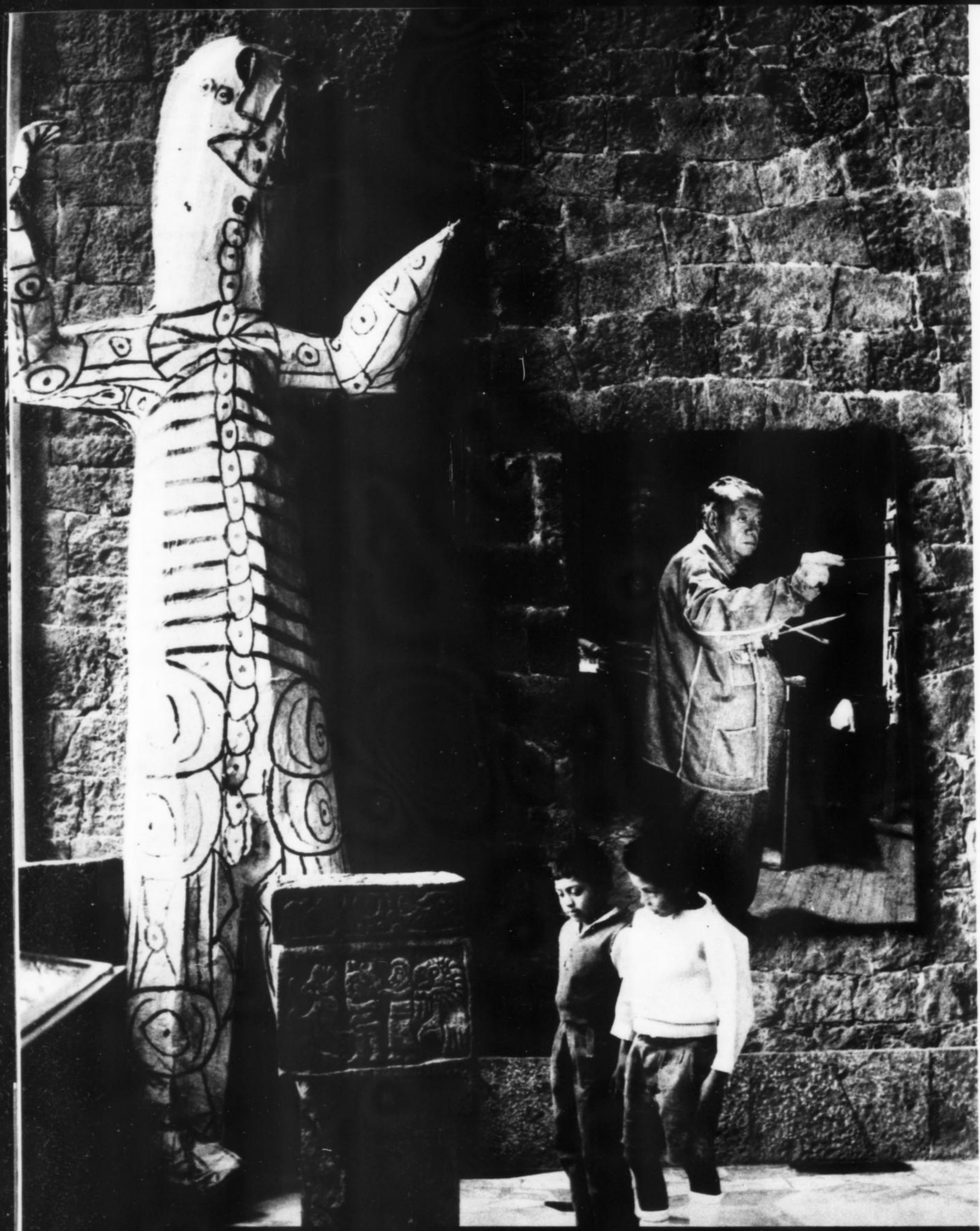

Photo © Fulvio Roiter, Venice

"La Casa de Anáhuac", a museum conceived by the great Mexican painter Diego Rivera as a storehouse of 4,000 years of Mexican popular art, bears striking witness to Rivera's passionate artistic ideal of a "return to the roots." Anáhuac was the original Aztec name for Mexico, but today it is applied to the vast central Mexican plateau. Built in the village of San Pablo Tepetlapa on the outskirts of the capital, the museum perpetuates the memory of the painter, seen here, as if through a window, in the photo-portrait on the wall.

A hard-hitting article on art and the artist in Latin America

CAGE BARS OF REALITY

by Jorge Enrique Adoum

NABOKOV tells how "... the first palpitation (of *Lolita)* was provoked by reading a newspaper article relating that a scientist, after months of effort, had succeeded in making a large ape in the Jardin des Plantes (in Paris) sketch a drawing; this sketch, the first ever produced by an animal, represented the bars of the poor beast's cage."

The same seems to happen with men whenever they are treated like apes who have to be "taught" to create; consider the inexhaustible wealth of invention in popular art or rebel art compared with the productions of any institutionalized art. Arnold von Salis, among others, remarked on the imaginative poverty of Greek art which "saw no further than the end of its nose", i.e. no further than the cage bars.

In "pre-Latin" America, where the artist was really integrated into his society and performed an irreplaceable function in it, evidence of an amazing creative imagination can be seen in the huge stone edifices or sculptures, pottery, textiles, and gold and silver work of the Maya, Aztec, Inca or Aymará cultures. With the Spanish conquest the first cultural colonialism set local craftsmen to mass-produce, in their workshops and schools, the images needed to furnish the churches which other Indians were building under the direction of foreign architects to plans brought from Spain and Portugal.

Quite touching efforts are made by certain Latin American critics to discover some trace of Indian personality in the religious art of that period; the baroque and plateresque colonial churches have even been called "a rebellion of stone".

With some rare exceptions like Aleijadinho, whose incredible Prophets reveal an originality infinitely superior to the Iberian peninsular and flamenco models, the most that can be found is some tropical bird, animal or plant added surreptitiously by Indian sculptors in the bas-reliefs of churches.

The legend of Miguel de Santiago, which fills the Ecuadorians with awe, is merely an extreme example of the cage-bars story; he is said to have stabbed his model in order to "capture" the agonized features for a canvas of Christ.

Official art of course expresses the imposed order and the colonized artist reluctantly submits to both: the major figures of Latin American colonial art were little more than skilled craftsmen producing goods for a market that was also their master —the Crown, the Court or the Church.

Yet the true artistic creator was the people: cut off in their island the inhabitants of Puná went on decorating their clay beads with fabulous geometrical animals, and the Easter Islanders erected mysterious giant idols in the sand; the anonymous popular prints of Brazil depicted figures from a strange mythology peopled with "lobisones", standing lizards and zoomorphic demons. Later, Posada's engraving drew on the funerary and funereal images of Mexican popular art. They were able to see further than the realities of man and nature.

Independence from Spain and Portugal did not basically alter social structures, nor was there any change in the mentality of the colonized artist; he began to paint military heroes instead of images, but the technique was still that imposed on him.

Then came landscapes (in which the wild scenery of America appears as placid as a Dutch landscape), scenes of creole life (sometimes painted by a lawyer politician like the Uruguayan Pedro Figari), genre paintings which helped to create abroad the image of a "typism" regarded at home as originality, and which were pure European impressionism.

FROM the nineteen thirties onwards art faces social reality—the collective prison, the common grave, the real horror of our countries—with the declared intention of helping to change the rule of injustice and the rule of official art with it.

In the "proletarian academicism" of realist painting, the Indians or Negroes in Latin America began to be depicted at work or being murdered—which, for them, was often the same thing. But neither in this manner—and even less in the manner of those who at about the same time began to paint

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JORGE ENRIQUE ADOUM, *Ecuadorian poet and writer, is the author of some ten books, including a 4-volume poetic cycle, "Los Cuadernos de la Tierra" (Notebooks on my Country, 1952-1962), and a critical work, "Poesia del Siglo XX" (Poetry of the 20th Century, 1957). A former National Director for Culture at Ecuador's Ministry of Education, he has also been Director of the Publications Division of Ecuador's Institute of Culture and Secretary of its Theatre and Folklore Institute. He is now assistant editor of the Spanish edition of the "Unesco Courier" and is collaborating in Unesco's studies on Latin American culture.*

Photo from "José Guadalupe Posada"
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SKULL IN FINERY
WOMAN IN TEARS

The Ecuadorian artist Oswaldo Guayasamin (b. 1919) has depicted the harsh life of the Indian woman in Latin America in a series of paintings entitled "Women in Tears". Right, one of these paintings. A very popular artist, in every sense of the term, is the Mexican engraver, José Guadalupe Posada, who died in 1913. In Mexico there is a popular tradition that death is not a gloomy affair. Posada used this custom of treating death in a casual light-hearted manner to smite injustice with satire and irony in his famous engravings of skulls and skeletons "Los Calaveras". The skull wearing a gaily decorated hat in Posada's "Calavera Catrina" (left) is a thrust at vanity and a reminder that all ends in dust.

their own personal cell and the bars of individual conflicts—did the artist manage to regain in society the place that had belonged to the creator of the past, who had expressed himself and his people at the same time.

This is not a question of subject or technique. I have seen building labourers from the country laughing at a realist mural of agricultural work on the building on which they were employed. Realist art is no more "popular" than non-figurative art, just as the novel about the Indians of Latin America is no more widely read than avant-garde poetry.

But if the absence of a reading public may be partly due to illiteracy, in the case of art we have to admit that although it may seem easier to look at a picture than to read a book, an art gallery does not attract any more people than a library.

Art is today a test of culture: we cannot even say that everyone who reads visits an exhibition; that other illiteracy, which appeases its appetite for reading with romances or Westerns, satisfies its need for art with the calendars or colour prints of landscapes, dogs, flowers or nudes that decorate cobblers' workshops or house corridors and kitchens.

IF the organizers of the Toronto survey (see the "Unesco Courier", March 1971) found to their chagrin that between artistic innovation and its general public acceptance there is a gap of at least fifty years, just think how long it will take in our countries, many of which have no museum of modern art, many of whose art colleges have never seen a good reproduction and whose teaching of the history of painting has to make do with the black-and-white reproductions in the cheapest books.

As for the works of Latin American artists, in the colonial period they went to the courts of Spain and Portugal or the American viceroys; or else they formed part of religious architecture—the only way they could come in contact with the public who, as may easily be supposed, regarded them as religious objects rather than works of art.

Today they are kept in a few private collections or are used in municipal architecture or urbanism. Only occasionally, however, does the State commission works to decorate public buildings, and these inspire the working classes with greater fear and mistrust than galleries or museums, perhaps because there is often a guard at the door. Or they are placed in the office of the Minister or Director-General, to which the public is not admitted.

The customers of art dealers and art galleries consist almost exclusively of foreign collectors. And through the law of supply and demand or because of outside influences, or because even here "the customer is always right", not a few artists have had to submit to the fluctuations of market requirements, ranging from a predilection for fashionable European trends to the imposition of a "local style", non-observance of which, as the Director of the Guggenheim Museum reported, makes many North American tourists exclaim: "They paint like everybody else. What a pity!"

Thus Schücking's remark about artists who are democrats in politics and aristocrats in culture is nowhere truer than in Latin America; outcast —they and their work—from their society, forced into exile within it, not so much through rejection which is already a positive intellectual attitude, as through indifference or ignorance, they work for an élite to which they still do not belong nor wish to belong.

They spring from the middle class and share its divisions and privileges. But even there their personal situation is an awkward one. Because their art is closer to a handicraft, the social stigma attaching to manual work in the eyes of colonial society earns them the scorn of the upper middle class for whom literature may be in good taste.

Yet the marketable value of his work enables the artist to devote most of his time to it and also to engage in various sidelines which earn him the indifference of the lower middle class from whom he becomes alienated. The State seldom recognizes the artist's existence, unless he seems to be a threat to the established order; then a government may be proud of a painter's work, yet imprison him for supporting as a citizen the ideas he portrays in his painting; or the authorities may decide to obliterate the mural they commissioned. In this case not only right but might is on the side of the customer.

BUT the situation of the Latin American artist is far more painfully dramatic and has no parallel anywhere else. The cultural genocide committed by the conquistadors lay in cutting the roots. What might have been traditions are merely relics of a past without continuity. They left the Latin American artist little to inherit; they forced him to practise a foreign art and then accused him of stealing. And he became so "mixed up" that he began to cultivate locally the models transplanted from abroad and tried to invent a tradition, if only for a hybrid art.

His drama is the conflict between seeking his identity as a member of a society "in definition" and his authenticity as a creator—or in other words, the dilemma between the need to belong and the instinct to explore.

These two tendencies, which are not necessarily opposed—Rufino Tamayo and Wilfredo Lam, for instance, have managed to reconcile necessity and freedom—gave rise to the only two organized art movements in Latin America: Mexican muralism, which

Photo © Oswaldo Guayasamin

adapted European realism to express the historical and social realities of our countries, and Rio de la Plata constructive universalism, which set out to create "a synthesis of the positive features of neoplasticism,' cubism and surrealism".

After initial successes in seeking social documents and experimenting with plastic techniques, each of these movements went too far, tending on the one hand towards a paternalist aboriginalism reminiscent of the behaviour of societies for the protection of animals, and on the other (especially after the constructivism of Torres Garcia) towards an individual originality which deliberately ignored the slaughter going on a few yards from the studio window.

Until quite recently realism was regarded as a Latin American tradition and David Alfaro Siqueiros could affirm that "there is no road but ours". Realism—the photograph of a situation which had remained more or less static (apart from Cuba)—became the painter's official *curriculum vitae* even if reality was portrayed merely in the form of misfortune or natural disaster.

It was, however, the first denunciation of the shameful social reality of our "grievous republics", and its triumph—belatedly celebrated at a Venice Biennale—was "the triumph of a moral world" but certainly not of an art trend.

It was a question of *that* form for *that* subject. No one would have regarded it as an individual expression of America if it had been concerned with still life or realistic fictional representations (as though the Goya of "The Execution of the Rebels of May 3, 1808" and of the bitingly satirical etchings, "Los Caprichos", were not the same). And perhaps it would not have reached the same heights if the institutionalization of the Mexican Revolution had not fostered historical and anecdotal muralism.

While in the countries bordering the Pacific, especially those with an indigenous population, art was generally regarded as a compromise, although it sometimes substituted social reality for an idealization of historical truth, in the countries of the Atlantic seaboard, economically more advanced and retaining fewer traces of feudalism, artistic reality was emphasized as a "thing" in itself.

Artistic sectarianism accused non-figurative art of pandering to the taste of the bourgeoisie, but the same bourgeoisie bought realist pictures simply because they were a good investment. As for what might be called the public, realism left its conscience untroubled; it presented as one facet of society

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Academicism, sectarianism, officialism...

the martyred multitudes of history and as the other, the symbols of economic, political and religious power. The rest remained outside the picture in the comfortable position of spectators. Abstract art did not affect them.

Then a new art form appeared —"the identity photograph of a society that can equally well engage in a cruel war or enjoy the pornography of illusions instead of facing reality", as the Argentine art critic, Damian Carlos Bayon, has put it, "and in whose images we recognize ourselves and in alarm peer keenly into the mirror to see if it is really our image." Then in order to reject it, the call goes up again for an art for the people. In the end they want realism, not truth, which is not the same thing.

In many of our countries, whatever the intensity of nationalist feeling, there is an inferiority complex, even if it is only the reaction of an adolescent to an adult. Art expresses this in a swing of the pendulum: either taking a pride in one's misfortunes, like a beggar displaying his sores, or stretching up on tiptoe to be as tall as Europe, as though this were the unbeatable model, and the clearest sign of this is that gesture seeming to imply: "We can do it too".

One has to admit that Latin America has produced no original art movement since the time of the aboriginal cultures, although there have been original artists in the various trends. And so since the loss of tradition, there is no pure strain to preserve, even by force, as is happening with Latin American Indian music. And there is no possible escape from the art of the rest of the world, since there are no islands free from the contamination of that cold and almost mechanical impersonalism that is its salient characteristic today.

IT is absurd to claim to preserve the purity of art alone in a culture which has already adopted other such alien features as language, religion and customs. In general, the only result of these efforts has been to dis-inter a mode of expression that has been preserved as it was before the conquests and then to care for it like a lifeless museum piece.

Incorporated despite all contradictions into "Western civilization", it is not surprising that some Latin American artists found that their artistic conceptions coincided with those of some European art movements. Influences are then more inevitable than ever. What revolts us is the massive export of artistic byproducts. It is sad to see the popular crafts copying worthless foreign models because that is what the market wants: the "images d'Epinal" were converted into something like the typical plastic language of our working classes; the labels on Havana cigar boxes somehow or other echo Italian neoclassical allegory; Catholic devotional pictures show Virgins made up like film stars; Donald Duck appears on local pottery; the carpet-makers of Ecuador have replaced their own designs by floral motifs from foreign catalogues.

Some examples of non-popular art, on the other hand, are a gigantic fraud; in the heart of tropical Latin America there is a "Gothic" cathedral of reinforced concrete and in one of the countries with the strongest Indian tradition, there is a "Byzantine" cathedral with "Chinese" towers.

In the past, European art trends took a long time to cross the Atlantic and reached Latin America so belatedly that they were treated as new when they were already outmoded in their countries of origin. Herbert Read refused to include the Mexican muralists Siqueiros, Rivera and Orozco in his *History of Modern Painting* (and the French painter Utrillo too, for that matter).

Today, easier and more frequent travel, prompted by the need to know what is happening abroad—a tendency which is not to be blamed in view of the indifference if not hostility of the environment, the lack of museums and information, the scarcity of genuine criticism, neither superficial nor improvised, and the almost childish need to make comparisons in order to feel reassured—has reduced the time lag between Latin American art and other countries.

And so in Latin America, as in Europe and the United States, there is a search for movement in place of immobility (the Argentineans Pettoruti, Aizenberg, Fernandez Muro), the rehabilitation of surfaces (the Brazilian Camargo), op art (from the optical illusions of the Venezuelan Soto to the mechanical constructions of the Argentinean Le Parc), and the desire for the work to be transformed "from an object into a spectacle", as found in the compositions with spectator participation produced by the Argentinian Antonio Seguí, or in the University of Caracas with its transportable, expandable lecture halls.

Such travel, with which writers are usually reproached more bitterly, is of vital importance in the development of the Latin American artist; he feels less cut off from the rest of the world and yet he has not lost his citizenship.

The "unbridled creation of tropical shapes" of the Cuban Wilfredo Lam might perhaps be inexplicable without the teaching and personal influence of Picasso and Andre Breton. The painting of the Chilean Roberto Matta and his "critique of daily life comparable with that of Daumier" owes much to Marcel Duchamp. Kracjberg, in whose works "the material as well as the the illusion is volcanic", is a Brazilian who was born near Warsaw and has lived in Minsk, Vitebsk, Leningrad, Stuttgart, Paris, São Paulo and Parana. Kazuya Sakai, in whose geometrical rigour "painting has being not meaning", was born in Buenos Aires, educated in Japan and lived in New York and Mexico.

ALEJO Carpentier, in his introduction to "The Kingdom of this World", says that "because of the virginity of the landscape, its formation, ontology, and the Faustian presence of the Indian and the Negro, the Revelation of its recent discovery and the fertile crossbreeding it fostered, America is very far from having exhausted its store of mythologies."

For that very reason it is very far from having discovered all its reality. The new art is helping to complete the picture of this continent which is not exclusively agricultural, which has not remained stuck in the Corn Age, which does not wish to be shut into an exotic folklore to please the art tourists and the foreign TV cameramen.

Because we have never been asked our names and we ourselves are beginning to call ourselves by the names they gave us—Terra Firma, Hispano-America, Indo-America, Latin America, Third World, Developing Countries—we may have believed for a long time that we are what others imagine and see ourselves as they insist on seeing us from outside.

If art has always been a means of self-knowledge, we shall have to go on trying to find ourselves in an art that seeks to express not only the work we do but the essence of what we are. ■

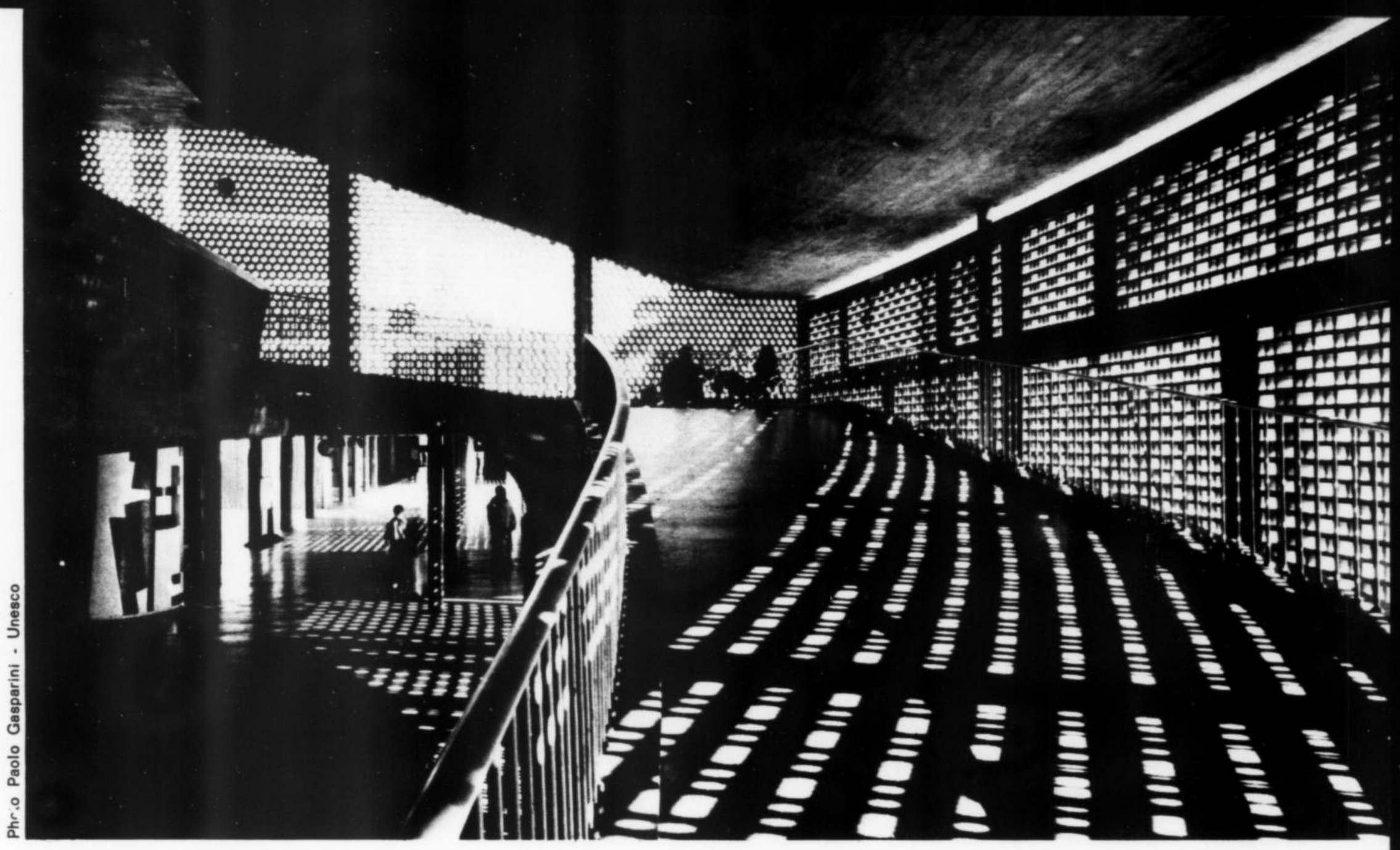

Photo Paolo Gasparini - Unesco

University City at Caracas, Venezuela, is one of Latin America's most architecturally modern university centres. Buildings on the 500-acre campus, designed by the Venezuelan architect, Raúl Villanueva, are linked by covered walks featuring a variety of structural designs and concrete canopies. Curving ramp (above) leads into the campus assembly hall. Sculpture, mosaics, tiled murals and other works by famous modern artists decorate many buildings.

THE NEW LANGUAGE OF LATIN AMERICAN LITERATURE

by
Rubén Bareiro Saguier

HISTORICALLY, Latin American culture is a mixture of Spanish and Portuguese traditions grafted on to the many-branched tree of American Indian culture, which little by little it absorbed along with later African elements and traces of migrations from other parts of the world.

This diversity has been at the root of a fundamental problem that has troubled Latin Americans over the years and continues to do so today—namely, the search for a cultural identity. This is apparent in Latin American literature, with its long search for a new language of expression, and the translation of ideas into an idiom to a certain extent foreign within a political context devoid of unity.

"Western culture"—that is, the sum of values and norms introduced by the conquerors—was imposed upon America. In this meeting of substantially different cultures, the cultural divergence was undoubtedly one of the most extreme ever known in the Christian era. It was all the more dramatic because, thanks to the technical superiority of their firearms, thanks to the wheel and the horse, a handful of Europeans conquered hundreds of thousands of Americans, many of them organized into powerful nations.

At the same time, it was the rationalist culture of the Renaissance that came into contact with the magic universe of the Indians. The complexity of this relationship might explain the conflict in which that experience which contributed to the creation of a Latin American cultural identity was lived.

Arising from the imposition of Western Christian culture on the New World, the use of Spanish Castilian and Portuguese as "national idioms"

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THREE NOBEL PRIZEWINNERS FOR LITERATURE

GABRIELA MISTRAL

Chilean poet and Nobel Prizewinner 1945, she won fame for her sympathetic verses about children, the downtrodden and the humble. She wrote four major books of poems, "Desolacion" (1922), "Tala" (1938), "Ternura" (1945) and "Lagar" (1954). A book of her "Selected Poems", translated by Langston Hughes, was published by the Indiana University Press, Bloomington, U.S.A., in 1957.

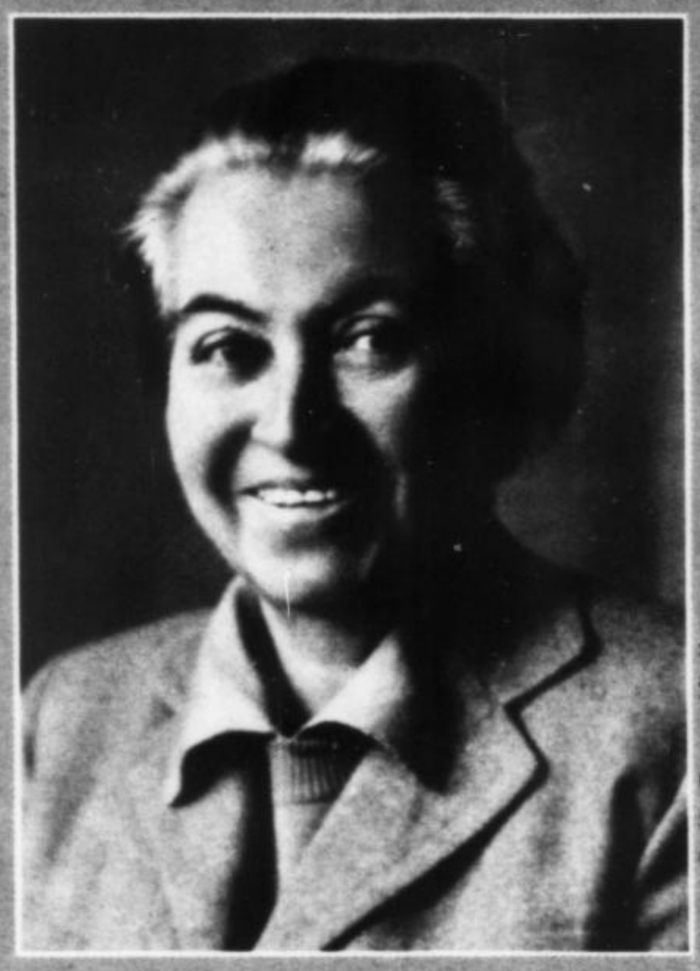

Photo © H. Roger Viollet

MIGUEL ANGEL ASTURIAS

Guatemalan novelist and poet, and Nobel Prizewinner 1967, he combines in his writings the mysticism of the Indians and the militancy of social protest. Three of his most important novels have been translated into English: "The President", translated by Frances Partridge (Victor Gollancz, London, 1963), "The Green Pope", translated by Gregory Rabassa (Delacote Press, New York, 1971), and "The Mulatto and Mister Fly", translated by Gregory Rabassa (Harmondsworth-Penguin Books, London, 1970).

in literary expression leads to the problem of the independence of Latin American letters. Are they not simply offshoots of metropolitan literature? To what extent does Latin American literature exist as an independent totality?

The doubt arises, in the first place, because our literature is expressed in a language defined by the qualifying term "Spanish", a term which has an unmistakable historical and political context. This tradition—an important element in defining identity—is alien to us, something borrowed. This is aggravated by the absence of Spanish-American unity, that is to say, of the single national basis of Spanish literature.

In reality, the language system as it relates to a concrete world, increases in complexity as it "adapts itself to the world it expresses". In this way, both languages, the Peninsular and the American, are simply variants of the same system, but variants which reveal different and independent experiences. Hence the diversity of both literatures, associated by a common system and separated by the variants and reflecting different historical universes.

The break in Peninsular linguistic purity, both in the dominions of Spain and in Brazil—in which there is not only evidence of Indian speech but also of Negro influence—is extremely important for the later evolution of Latin American literature and, to a great extent, for the present quest for expression.

The linguistic break is critical and becomes a conscious programme immediately after Independence. In effect, as early as 1825, people speak of the "Brazilian language" and a little later, in Spanish America, of the "national language" especially in Argentina and Mexico.

It was the Modernist movement which was to break with the linguistic purity of Spanish American literature in a conscious manner and within the area of high culture. If the Romantic "nativists" intuitively regenerate the language, the Modernists do so deliberately, through their aesthetic explorations. While ideologically Romanticism was anti-Spanish, Modernism was pro-French and its greatest representative, Rubén Darío, gladly accepted the accusation of "mental gallicism" applied to his school.

WITH the generation of 98, Spain recognized the value of the Modernist experience and introduced it into the Iberian Peninsular. It was the first time that the former colonies had imposed their cultural patterns on the old metropolis; the direction of influence had been reversed.

The American origin of the Modernist renewal does not depend on indigenous, local or native elements. Essentially cosmopolitan and refined, Modernism denied immediate reality—Darío expressed it thus: "I detest the life and the time into which I have been born"—and where it called upon such elements, it was in the same spirit of exoticism that inspired references to the East or to Greek and Latin antiquity.

In Brazil, the speech of the ethnic minorities of the country has been a more important source of literary language. The Brazilian Modernists looked towards indigenous and Negro cultures in order to borrow words and expressions from the former, rhythms, structures and images of expression as well as the lexical element from the latter.

The initiation in Brazil of what is known as Afro-Brazilian literature occurs at the same time as Afro-Antillean literature: Luis Palés Matos, Ramón Guirao, Emilio Ballagas, Nicolás Guillén, José Tallet.

Referring to these movements, the Haitian writer, René Depestre, describes their "use of rhythmic elements of onomatopoeia and of sensorial elements proper to the oral literature of the Negro. This signals the initiation of the 'Negro theme' as a literary fashion." Among the writers mentioned, Nicolás Guillén is outstanding since the content of his works reflects his mulatto condition and thus transcends Africanism.

Literary Indigenism which emerges in the Spanish American novel around the 1920s and 1930s, was, from the point of view of stylistic expression, more timid and colourless than Africanism. In reality, despite the ideology of protest on behalf of the Indian, the language continued to be that of Modernism with modifications in its development because of naturalist and positivist influences.

Indigenous words were used; the writing was larded with more or less indigenous expression but the selective criteria continued to be the same as Modernist exoticism. Sympathy for the Indian did not go beyond the framework of a superficial interest and did not extend to the investigation of the components of their culture.

By using the myth-coloured speech of the Indians, Miguel Angel Asturias blew open the language of the Latin American narrative. Having gone to the roots of *maya-quiché* culture, Asturias demonstrated the magic value of the word in that civilization. Fur-

Photo © Mario Muchnik, Buenos Aires

PABLO NERUDA

Nobel Prizewinner 1971, Pablo Neruda is a Chilean poet who is concerned with harried, exploited, alienated man. Among the major works of this prolific writer the most important published so far in English is his "Canto General", translated by Nathaniel Tarn and published under the title "The Heights of Machu Picchu", Jonathan Cape, London (1966). Several selections of his poems have also been published in English including: "Selected Poems", edited by Nathaniel Tarn and translated by Anthony Kerrigan and others (Jonathan Cape, London, 1970), "The Early Poems", translated by David Osman and Carlos B. Hagen (Rivers Press, New York, 1969), and "A New Decade of Poems, 1958-1967", translated by Ben Belitt and Alaister Reid (Grove Press, New York, 1969).

Photo © Sara Facio, Alicia d'Amico - Buenos Aires

ther, by assuming this sacred function and translating it into a literary plane, Asturias increased the power of language, of a language which is generated by inherent laws.

This is creation through and within the word, as American Indian culture conceives it. The work of Asturias—and his masterpiece, *Hombres de maiz* (Men of Maize)—is the clearest example of the indigenous cultural contribution to Spanish American literary language.

Two other contemporary writers have had the same impact as Asturias although in a more discreet, a more underground manner: José María Arguedas and Augusto Roa Bastos. The former is a Peruvian whose mother tongue was Quechua and who recreates the marvellous world of the sierra Indians. He writes in a Spanish that is poured into the moulds of the aboriginal language.

Arguedas attempted to define his style thus: "I wrote in a type of Castilian which is not that of a mixed language but of a mixed style in which the spirit and the characteristics of Quechua are clearly vibrant, are clearly evident within the Castilian style."

The Spanish professor, Antonio Tovar, has made a prediction about "the languages which could emerge in America". It is based on the "hope that at least in areas that are now remote, in those profound and rich deposits of old traditions, this fruitful fusion of cultures and of languages will be kept free and alive."

Another phenomenon—the contemporary determination to realize the synthesis of almost five centuries of warring cultural existence through literary expression—is worth serious reflection and analysis, although this is a project still to be realized.

Never was awareness of the task so acute as in the works of the present generation. "We live in countries where everything is still to be said, but in which we still have to discover how to say this everything. If, in a Latin American novel, there is no striving after an original language, then it does not exist for me," declares the Mexican novelist, Carlos Fuentes. The path seems to be that of bringing the written language closer to living speech, a task which is slow and difficult.

THE contemporary writers who have come to the fore since 1945, base their literary creation on linguistic innovation. This means that literature is progressively appropriating an already-existing cultural heritage; a collective creation which is the result of constant borrowings and grafted onto the trunk of the mother tongue. The so-called "degeneration of the language"—an old colonialist myth—is thus shown to be fruitful.

Language—even the literary language—is not a capricious invention but a historical product. In this sense, the most recent writers, by breaking the linear development of language, testify to a present reality that is characterized by the increasing complexity of the Latin American world. And this is also valid for Brazil where, from the extreme innovations of the Modernists onwards, the literary language went through a process similar to that of Spanish America.

The breakthrough which permitted these writers to appropriate colloquial and regional language accounts for the emergence of a writer like João Guimarães Rosa who was able to make the speech of the Brazilian North East into a universal instrument.

The *sertão* (backlands) was one of the last strongholds where Portuguese met up with indigenous and African languages. Guimarães Rosa uses the substratum of this spoken language to construct the long narrative-monologue of Riobaldo (which is more appropriately heard than read) in his *Gran sertão veredas* (The Devil To Pay in the Backlands).

The possible limitations of this folk and colloquial speech are overcome by great inventive skill and by the poetic energy of the novelist who uses words as stimulants, as free suggestions, rather than as fixed categories.

The theme—which is the second factor selected in order to analyse the phenomenon of the meeting of cultures in Latin American literature—rapidly becomes the key to the definition of what is American and, as will be obvious, becomes the programme of literary emancipation.

From the beginning of the nineteenth century up to the present, many writers have seen the problem of literary independence, as one of "discovering a continent" through the description of the geographical and social environment. Furthermore, some critics have emphasized the telluric in the definition of *our literature*, thus giving precedence to the "content" aspect as a synonym of "authenticity".

The vision of Latin America during the colonial period was generally idyllic or, in any case, out of touch with reality. With Independence, the vision fundamentally changes and is

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more in touch with reality. The Latin American Romantic generation—especially Andrés Bello in Spanish-speaking Latin America and Gonçalves de Magalhães in Brazil—outline a definite programme: the new literature should match the new political reality.

The programme of the Romantics—a literature with an American theme and content—represents a search for continental identity, geared towards a future and with a concept of America as a complete whole.

The Romantic programme of "literary independence" is carried out precisely by the writers who emerge in the second decade of the twentieth century, from the period of the Mexican Revolutionary novel onwards. These also assume an essentially ethical approach and attempt, like the Romantics, to seek an American literary identity in theme and content.

The analogy no longer applies beyond this point because naturally times have changed and ideologies have been transformed.

When the generation of writers which J. A. Portuondo defines as "the generation of social problems" emerged, the Mexican Revolution was at its height; soon after, the Russian Revolution broke out, and in Spanish America the University Reform movement got under way. These political events profoundly affect the works of the period, determining the overriding interest of the writers in social themes and specifically determining the committed nature of that literature.

Unesco translations series — Representative works

MANUEL ANTONIO DE ALMEIDA (Brazil). Memoirs of a Militia Sergeant. Translated by Linton L. Barrett, Pan American Union, Washington, U.S.A., 1959, 244 pp., ($1.50).

CONCOLORCORVO (Pen name of Alonso Carrio de la Bandera - Peru) El Lazarillo, A Guide for Inexperienced Travellers between Buenos Aires and Lima, 1773. Translated by W.D. Kline, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, U.S.A., 1965, 315 pp.

MANUEL DE J. GALVAN (Dominican Republic). The Cross and the Sword. Translated by Robert Graves, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, U.S.A., 1954; Victor Gollancz, London, U.K., 1956, 366 pp. (75p).

BALDOMERO LILLO (Chile). The Devil's Pit and other stories. Translated by Esther S. Dillon and Angel Flores, Pan American Union, Washington, U.S.A., 1959, 152 pp.

TERESA DE LA PARRA (Venezuela). Mama Blanca's Souvenirs. Translated by Harriet de Onis, Pan American Union, Washington, U.S.A. 1960, 129 pp.

OCTAVIO PAZ (Mexico). Anthology of Mexican Poetry. Translated by Samuel Beckett, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, U.S.A., 1958, 213 pp., ($6); 1965, Paperback edition ($1.95); Thames and Hudson, London, U.K., 1958.

FLORENCIO SANCHEZ (Uruguay). Representative Plays. Translated by Willis Knapp Jones, Pan American Union, Washington, U.S.A., 1961, 326 pp.

DOMINGO SARMIENTO (Argentina) Travels (selection). Translated by Ines Munoz, Pan American Union, Washington, U.S.A., 1963, 297 pp.

JUAN ZORILLA DE SAN MARTIN (Uruguay). Tabare. Translated by Walter Owen, Pan American Union, Washington, U.S.A., 1956, 366 pp

Unesco collection of contemporary works

MODERN BRAZILIAN POETRY. Translated by John Nist, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, U.S.A., 1962, 175 pp, Available from Kraus Reprint Co. New York ($9.50).

OCTAVIO PAZ (Mexico). Selected Poems. Translated by M. Rukeyser in collaboration with the author, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, U.S.A., 1963, 171 pp ($5.75); U.K. title "Configuration", Jonathan Cape, London, 1971 (£ 2.95).

JAIME TORRES BODET (Mexico). Selected Poems. Translated by S.P. Karsen, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, U.S.A., 1964, 155 pp. ($5.75).

Many of the above books are out of print, and are listed for information purposes.

HOWEVER, part of this fiction—the so called "novel of the land"—follows an identical line to that of the nineteenth-century in its admiration for wild nature which must, at the same time, be conquered in order to make it productive.

In any case, the greater part of this literature is definitely political; it is a literature that denounces and protests. Further, the historical situation had changed since the period of the Romantic generation. Spain had ceased to be the target for Spanish American writers. The colonial period was far off. The period in which there emerges the generation of "social problems" coincides with foreign penetration and armed intervention.

Anti-colonialist literature was written which denounced invasion or the miserable conditions in which the exploited population lived in the mines, in the banana plantations or the petroleum fields. The disturbing fresco of continental exploitation was depicted hurriedly, indignantly with twisted, caricatural, grotesque personages through whom the writer hoped to state his protest and to regenerate man rather than to create a novelistic world.

The Brazilian novelists of the 1930s cultivated a type of narrative that was exactly equivalent to that of their Spanish American contemporaries. The most important are the "North-eastern" novelists—Graciliano Ramos, José Lins do Rego, Jorge Amado.

Within this social tendency, it is interesting to pick out the Indigenist stream which is especially relevant to our theme. What differentiates these social works from the idealized Romantic position of the Indianists is in their emphasis on the real problem of the Indian as an outsider in a class society.

It has been pointed out already that, on the linguistic plane, Indigenism did not give rise to very convincing works. Similarly, thematically, it suffered from undeniable faults; a caricatural dualism, a predominantly humanitarian approach which attempted to defend the Indians from exploitation and at the same time condemned their culture by implication, by proposing that they be levelled up to and integrated within "white" society.

The reaction was foreseeable. Indigenism had been based on the classical, ethnocentric theories of the West. The authors who transcended these limitations—Arguedas, Asturias—are those who exposed the essence of indigenous culture by measuring the continuing validity of the structures of these civilizations.

Another occasion when the problematic meeting of cultures as a theme appears in Latin American literature occurs with the emergence of the black question. We have already seen the birth of Africanism as an expressive instrument of African rhythms. Later there arises *négritude* which attempts to explain the deep roots as the consequence of that cultural shock.

This new attitude accuses Africanism of having retained only the superficial, folklore aspects of the Negro condition in America. It preaches a spirit of rebellion in order to realize a "search for identity". This is most fully realized in West Indian literature—especially that in French; in Spanish, writers such as Nicolás Guillén and Adalberto Ortiz are worth mentioning. The ethical position of *négritude* puts it in the current of the "social problem" stream in Spanish American literature.

To sum up, the search for literary identity through the production of a social and committed novel represents an important step in the process of identifying that social reality. But it was, to a certain extent, an erroneous search. The very criterion of "documentary truth" that was adopted was deceptive because it represented a surface deformed by the redemptionist intention which the author imposed. In this sense, the term "sociological literature" also attributed to it, is dubious.

José Carlos Mariátegui had already warned of the danger of a realism that drew away from reality. And we have not even mentioned the weaknesses—whose evil consequences are still with us—which resulted from the attempt to found the authenticity of the Latin American writer on telluric and protest factors.

This leads us to consideration of the "content" aspect as conceived and put into practice by novelists who began to write about 1945. Contemporary Latin American writers are in the process of making a synthesis by drawing on a multiplicity of cultural borrowings, on the tensions which have arisen from these conflictive encounters, on previous experience and on the wish to penetrate deeper and to experiment. The result is that their vision of reality is enriched by their multiple approach to it.

BORGES described the transition from one conception of literature to another with an ironic and lucid phrase: "reality is not always local." Recognizing the diversity and complexity of the social and cultural environment, writers have renounced superficial description and explicit moral statement. Instead, they stress the discontinuity, contradictions and doubts that mark the social and cultural limits of an underdeveloped continent which oscillates between the opposites poles of revolution and total dependence.

Their procedure is often to use basic cultural ingredients. Thus the underlying, distilled thematic presence of Indian mythological symbols can be detected in a great many present-day works, especially by Mexicans (Fuentes, Rulfo, Arreola, Yáñez) and in writers of other countries like Arguedas and Roa Bastos. I am not here alluding to direct utilization (of the legendary element) but to its literary transmutation and adaptation to the contemporary situation—in function of the narrative.

Seen in this way, the theme or content of literature can be considered a defining element of Latin American literary identity because it is the result of a great diversity of cultural contributions, and as such is always open to new developments. ■

LITERATURE AND UNDERDEVELOPMENT *(Continued from page 15)*

from Max Bense; nevertheless, it has led to a redefinition of the national past and has permitted unknown poets to be read in a new way and has aptly shed light on the stylistic revolution of the great Modernists, Mario de Andrade and Oswald de Andrade.

Considered as a consequence of backwardness and lack of economic development, dependence presents other aspects which have repercussions on literature. Let us once more note the phenomenon of ambivalence which is expressed in the impulse both to copy and to turn away from the model; apparently contradictory when seen in isolation, they may appear complementary from another point of view.

Backwardness which stimulates the servile copying of all that the fashion in advanced countries decrees, also encourages writers to emigrate, whether to the interior or to the exterior. Backwardness, which concentrates on the most idiosyncractic aspects of national identity, and may really be an unsuspected way of offering the exoticism that European sensibility wants as a distraction, turns into an acute form of dependence within independence. From the present perspective, it appears that the two tendencies are the same and arise from the same situation of backwardness or underdevelopment.

In its crudest form, the servile imitation of styles, themes and attitudes and literary habits is laughable or limited by provincialism, having been the mere compensatory elitism of a colonial country.

Equally crude, though perhaps in another way, are certain elementary forms of nativism and literary regionalism which reduce human problems to their picturesque element, transforming the passion and suffering of rural man and the coloured populations to the equivalents of tropical pineapple or pawpaw.

This attitude may not only be analogous to the first but also combined with it, once it results in supplying the urban or European reader or the artificially Europeanized with the almost tourist reality which he would like to see in America.

Yet in Latin America, as a consequence of underdevelopment, regionalism was and still is a stimulus to literature. In the stage of new national consciousness which corresponds to the situation of backwardness, there is, above all, room for that decorative picturesqueness which functions as a discovery and recognition of the reality of a country and its incorporation into literary themes.

It is the case with the Amazon region, which attracted Brazilian novelists and short story writers from the beginning of Naturalism, in the 1870s and 1880s, at the height of the picturesque period.

It became the material half a century later of *La Vorágine* (The Vortex) by the Colombian, José Eustasio Rivera, which is situated between the picturesque and protest literature (though it is more patriotic than social); and it came to be an important element in *La Casa Verde* (The Green House) by Mario Vargas Llosa in the recent period of heightened technical awareness in which the picturesque and protest are alike thrust into the background before the human impact which is present immanently in universal works.

IT will not be necessary to enumerate all the other literary areas which correspond to the panorama of backwardness and underdevelopment: areas like the Andean high plateau or the Brazilian *sertão* (backlands); or even the condition and environment of the Cuban, Venezuelan and Brazilian Negro, as in the poems of the Cuban, Nicolás Guillén, the Brazilian, Jorge de Lima, in *Ecue-Yamba-O* by Alejo Carpentier, *Pobre Negro* by the Venezuelan, Rómulo Gallegos or *Jubiabá* by the Brazilian, Jorge Amado; or, if you wish, of the plainsman—from the *llano*, *pampa* or *caatinga*.

The economic reality of underdevelopment preserves the regional dimension as a living actuality, although the urban dimension is increasing in importance But it is sufficient to realize that some good writers and even the best have found material in regionalism for works which have universal validity—writers such as the Peruvian, José Maria Arguedas, the Colombian, Gabriel García Márquez, the Paraguayan, Augusto Roa Bastos and the Brazilian, João Guimãraes Rosa. Only in the countries in which the culture of the big cities prevails completely, countries such as the Argentine, Uruguay and perhaps Chile, has regional literature become a real anachronism.

In the period of heightened national consciousness, characterized by the idea of backwardness, we had a picturesque regionalism which in several countries was believed to be the true literature. I am speaking of a genre long outdated or reduced to the level of sub-literature. Its most generalized and persistent manifestations during its Golden Age was,

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE

perhaps, the *gauchismo* of the River Plate region.

The 1930s and 1940s saw the emergence of a different form of regionalism as reflected in what was referred to as the "social novel", "Indigenism", or the "Northeastern novel" according to the country of origin and which, while not exclusively regional, was so to a high degree.

This regionalism is of greater interest to us, since it preceded awareness of underdevelopment, but it is right to note that, long before this, writers such as the Bolivian, Alcides Arguedas and the Mexican, Mariano Azuela, had already attained a more realistic sense of the living conditions and the human problems of the underdogs.

Among writers who set out to demystify American reality and who do so with analytic vigour, sometimes attaining a high level of artistic skill, are the Guatemalan, Miguel Angel Asturias, the Ecuadorian, Jorge Icaza, the Peruvian, Ciro Alegria, the Brazilians, Jorge Amado and José Lins do Rego and others.

All of them, at least in part of their work, write social novels closely related to regionalism which frequently include the residue of negative picturesqueness, together with a certain sketchy humanitarianism.

Despite the fact that many of those writers use a spontaneous, unconventional language, the weight of social conscience at times acts on their style as a positive factor and gives rise to the search for interesting solutions adapted to the representation of inequality and injustice.

Without mentioning the consummate master, Asturias, a discursive novelist like Icaza also owes his continuing validity less to his indignant protest or to the emphatic way he paints the exploiters than to certain stylistic devices used to express poverty.

This is the case with his novel, *Huasipungo*, in which certain uses of the diminutive and of lamenting speech rhythms represent a sort of diminution of man, his reduction to elemental functions which are associated with linguistic inarticulacy in order to symbolize privation.

In *Vidas Sêcas* (Barren Lives), the Brazilian, Graciliano Ramos, carries to the extreme his normal verbal sobriety, devising a language which is reduced to ellipsis, to monosyllable and to the minimum of phrases in order to express the human frustration of the man of the backlands whose life is circumscribed to the level for survival.

From this point of view, what we now have is a flowering of the novel, characterized by technical refinement which has transformed the vision of the regions and human lives so that what had been a matter of picturesque details becomes more abstract and acquires universality.

Laying aside sentimentalism and rhetoric, drawing on non-realistic elements such as surrealism, the absurd, magic situations, anti-naturalist techniques such as the stream of consciousness, simultaneous viewpoints, distortion, ellipsis, the contemporary novel still uses what was, previously, the very substance of nativism, exoticism and social documentation.

We are thus led to suggest a third phase which might be called supra-regionalism. It corresponds to the painful awareness of underdevelopment and represents a transcendence of the type of naturalism based on an empirical vision of the world.

From this supra-regionalism, there develops in Brazil, the revolutionary work of João Guimarães Rosa which is solidly based on what might be termed the universality of the region. The fact of having transcended the picturesque and the documentary makes the presence of the region more alive in works like that of the Mexican, Juan Rulfo, whether in the fragmentary, obsessive reality of *El llano en llamas* (The Burning Plain) or in the ghostly reticence of *Pedro Páramo*. ■

Antonio Candido

PATHWAYS TO A NEW ART *(Continued from page 21)*

being in any way realist. His "Homage to the Race", a huge canvas in the Fine Arts Museum of Mexico City, is an example of the way he combines a dream-like atmosphere with vibrant colours, peculiar to Mexico.

Totally different and yet equally removed from the tradition of Mexican muralism are the geometric designs of the Guatemalan-born Carlos Mérida which were inspired by pre-Columbian art. Younger painters like the abstract expressionists Vicente Rojo and Luis Cuevas, whose sombre drawings have a Goyaesque atmosphere, tend to concentrate on paintings, drawings and illustrations and have not followed the muralist tradition.

In Brazil and Venezuela, however, Modernism has been a consciously-pursued policy. Indeed Brasilia and the University of Caracas are showpieces of Modernism.

Brasilia, designed by Oscar Niemeyer, provides a splendid setting for the work of sculptors like Alfredo Ceschiati. Sculpture has enjoyed an extraordinary development in Brazil, led by artists such as Sergio Camargo.

In Caracas, the University building provided the same kind of patronage to national and international artists as Brasilia. Here abstractionism has been the outstanding tendency, notably in the painting of Soto and in the op art of Carlos Cruz-Diez.

In Argentina, where abstract painting has flourished since Emilio Pettoruti's 1924 exhibition, there have been a number of important tendencies such as Otra Figuración and Madi. The latter was formed under the leadership of the European-born, Kosice (1924), who makes spatial structures of perspex, wood and metal. More recently, there has been an outstanding exponent of op art, Julio Le Parc.

Outside these big countries, where there is private patronage, an astonishing number of painters of international standing have emerged in Chile, Peru and in Colombia, painters who obviously depend on an international market. In Chile, Roberto Matta has led the attack on "official art" and created an art of unreality, using striking, visceral forms. In Peru, this international trend is represented by Szyszlo and in Colombia by Alejandro Obregón among others.

But Colombia has also produced one of the really original artists of Latin America—Fernando Botero—whose "monsters" offer a strange, satirical comment on society. Botero first began painting in this style in his "Homage to Mantegna", in which he first introduced human figures whose heads were blown up to grotesque size. His "Presidential Family" with bishops, soldiers and children is like a distorted photograph, the large heads underlining the vacuity of the faces.

These examples will, perhaps, suffice to show how difficult it is to generalize. Latin American art came of age with the Mexican muralist movement but in recent years, by breaking out of the nationalist framework, it has commanded international attention. The fact that many Latin American paintings now hang in galleries in North America and Europe indicates that the plastic arts have left provincialism far behind. ■

Jean Franco

BOOKSHELF

RECENT UNESCO BOOKS

■ **Vacation Study Abroad XX.** Trilingual: English - French - Spanish, 1971, 45p, $1.50. **See inside back cover.**

■ **Science for Development. An essay on the origin and organization of national science policies.** Prepared by Jacques Spaey, 1971, 224 pp (£1.35, $4.50)

■ **Statistics of Students Abroad 1962-1968: Where they go; where they come from; what they study.** (Statistical studies and reports, 18.) Bilingual: English - French, 1972, 416 pp (£1.95, $6.50)

■ **Teaching and Learning. An introduction to new methods and resources in higher education.** (The development of higher education), by Norman MacKenzie, Michael Eraut and Hywel Jones, 1971 (2nd imp.), 209 pp (£1.05, $3.50)

■ **Unesco Source Book for Science Teaching** (Unesco source books on curricula and methods). Revised and enlarged edition of a Unesco "best-seller", Co-edition Unesco-Educational Productions Ltd., Wakefield, England, 1972, 250 pp (Paperback £1.05, $3.50; Cloth £1.65, $5.50)

■ **Wastage in Education.** A study prepared for the International Bureau of Education by M.A. Brimer and L. Pauli (Studies and surveys in comparative education series) 1971, 155 pp (90p, $3)

■ **Scientists Abroad.** A study of the international movement of persons in science and technology, by Allan McKnight, 1971, 147 pp (90p, $3)

★

OTHER BOOKS

■ **The Emergence of Man,** by John E. Pfeiffer. Harper and Row, New York, 1969 ($10); Thomas Nelson and Sons, Ltd., London, 1970 (£3.75)

■ **Soma, Divine Mushroom of Immortality,** by R. Gordon Wasson, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., N.Y. 1971 ($15). **See item this page**

■ **Jewish Art. An Illustrated History,** edited by Cecil Roth. Revised edition prepared under the direction of Bezalel Narkiss. 47 colour plates, 345 black and white illustrations. Massada Press, Jerusalem, 1971, 332 pp

■ **Science and Education in the 17th Century. The Webster-Ward Debate,** edited by A.G. Lebus, MacDonald and Co., London; American Elsevier Inc., New York, 1970, 352 pp ($15.25, £6)

■ **The Geography of Life,** by Wilfred T. Neill, Columbia University Press, New York and London, 1969, 480 pp (£5.85)

■ **Modernization and Diversity in Soviet Education.** (Praeger special studies in international economics and development), by Jaan Pennar, Ivan Bakalo and George Bereday, Praeger Publishers Inc., N.Y., Washington, London, 1971, 395 pp ($20)

UNESCO NEWSROOM

Cultural news from Unesco

The first number of a new monthly Unesco information bulletin for cultural editors was published in January. The publication aims to keep journalists specializing in cultural topics informed of what Unesco and its associated organizations are doing or plan to do in the cultural field. A subject of current interest receives special coverage each month. "Cultural News from Unesco" is published by Unesco's Press Division, Place de Fontenoy, Paris 7e.

Moving art

A Unesco travelling exhibition on the arts of Africa, produced in 20 sets, has begun visits to 100 countries. Nine earlier Unesco mobile art exhibitions have been shown in schools, factories, universities and cultural centres in 85 countries since 1949. Their themes include Leonardo da Vinci drawings, Japanese woodcuts, Chinese painting and Persian miniatures.

Divine mushroom

One of the key enigmas of cultural history has been the identity of a plant called "Soma" in the ancient Aryan religion. In a remarkable study, "Soma, Divine Mushroom of Immortality", R. Gordon Wasson, an American specialist in the ethno-history of mushrooms, advances and documents the thesis that "Soma" was a hallucinogenic mushroom, *Amanita muscaria*. His book, which throws new light on the role of mushrooms in religious ritual, first appeared in a $200 limited edition in 1968. A new edition of this highly recommended book has just been published by Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., New York at $15 (See Bookshelf).

Development research in southern India

The Madras Institute of Development Studies now issues a regular monthly bulletin on development questions and in particular on development problems in the State of Tamil Nadu and southern India. A recent issue (No. 11, Volume I, December 1971) publishes articles on "A Science Policy for Tamil Nadu" and "Youth and the Second Development Decade of the United Nations", and presents in a special 160 page section, papers from the Madras seminar on research for economic and social development, held last September.

Subterranean 'sea'

Soviet geologists have discovered huge subterranean reservoirs of fresh water beneath the steppes and deserts of Kazakhstan, whose volume is estimated to be greater than that of the Caspian Sea.

Malaysian cultural studies

The first international meeting to be devoted to Malaysian culture and its role in the evolution of south-east Asian civilization was held recently under Unesco's auspices in Kuala Lumpur. The meeting set out the main lines of a 6-year Unesco cultural studies programme covering the languages, literature, art, beliefs and ethical values and institutions of a complex and little-known culture.

INTERNATIONAL BOOK YEAR AROUND THE WORLD

During the first week of April, publishers and booksellers in Thailand will sell books at half price to mark the country's first Book Week.

★

EXPOLIBRO, the International School Book Fair, opens this month in Bogota, Colombia, where a Latin American Regional Centre for Book Development has been set up with help from Unesco.

★

During January, letters in the U.K were franked with the slogan "International Book Year 1972: Books for All".

★

The Asia Foundation in the U.S.A. will donate 1,000,000 books and professional journals to institutions and individuals in Asia during 1972.

★

A study course for librarians from Asia and Africa on the role of public libraries in social, economic and cultural development is being held in the U.S.S.R. during International Book Year.

★

"Books for All " was the theme of the fourth International Book Fair held last month in Cairo, where a Unesco-sponsored meeting on book development in the Arab countries is to be held this Spring.

★

Unesco is preparing a special bibliography of children's books that promote international understanding.

★

A "Talking Book for the Blind" Library will be opened this year by the government of Malta.

Letters to the Editor

'THAT MAN TO MAN WOULD BROTHER BE'

Sir,

The "Unesco Courier" is the only magazine which is truly honest, and basically wholesome in all aspects as a publication for the many, such as myself, who are not well informed as to world events. For many years the writer of this letter has entirely discarded the commercial type of magazines in wide variety, made available to the general public. Similarly, the daily press is in most cases biased racially or politically. Truth seems a most obscure factor to the reader.

The enlightening articles contained in "Answers to Racism" (November 1971) I do sincerely pray, will be made available by the press in general to show the Western World they do not have prior claims to any divine intelligence. Now in my 69th year, and looking back over many years in ocean-going ships, in peace and war, these years were most valuable in proving to me, a Scot by birth, that the white race has completely failed to convince the peoples of Africa or the Orient that they possess superior qualities.

The Scottish poet, Robert Burns, more than two hundred years ago, wrote of his vision of hope for humanity, "That man to man, the world over, would brother be." I pray for such a realization. Like Burns, I scorn avarice and power domination and racial discrimination. May his vision, and the tremendous effort of Unesco be fulfilled.

I ceased school attendance at the age of thirteen: I have no scholastic abilities whereby I could contribute intelligent discourse to Unesco. But my reading of the "Courier" is ever a great stimulus to deeper understanding of humanity. Finally, I pray for the day when the U.N. is the only supreme power in controlling and guiding the ways of man.

Robert Donaldson
Montreal, Canada

PERSIAN VASE

Sir,

In your issue devoted to Iran (Oct. 1971), under the heading "A Persian Bestiary" (page 10), you describe a vase decorated with leopards and wild goats as coming from Sialk. In fact, this vase was discovered at the Hisar site to the southeast of the Caspian Sea, and dates back to 3500 B.C.

F. Bagherzadeh
Technical Adviser
Ministry of Culture and the Arts
Teheran, Iran

S. O. S. ANGKOR

Sir,

I read with great interest your magnificent number, "SOS Angkor", (December 1971). May I thank you most sincerely for producing this issue with its moving appeal to the world's conscience for help to preserve Angkor from the destruction which could result from the war now ravaging our country.

The examples of Carthage and Warsaw, quoted by Hiroshi Daifuku in his article "SOS Angkor", should impel governments, international organizations and all men of goodwill to act without delay to save this part of mankind's cultural heritage.

Since the beginning of the present conflict, the Director-General of Unesco has made unceasing efforts in this direction through his skill and diplomacy and through aid of various kinds. I am firmly convinced that efforts to make the Angkor complex a neutral zone will be successful. With Angkor saved from destruction, the Khmer people will be eternally grateful to Unesco.

Tan Kim Huon
Representative of the Khmer Republic
National Committee for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict
Phnom-Penh, Khmer Republic

PRIORITY FOR SURVIVAL

Sir,

The practical uses of space exploration are slowly becoming apparent. The conquest of space is above all a "conquest of dignity", through the opening-up of new possibilities for man. The moon no longer symbolizes inaccessibility (Expressions such as "You are asking for the moon", lose their meaning now that moon fragments are available here on earth).

But unless man defends this dignity, he runs the risk of losing it, for the simple reason that the human race is threatened with extinction. It would be far better to concentrate on the costly business of ensuring man's survival rather than on the no less costly search for a widening of possibilities open to man.

I have long wished to express my gratitude to Unesco which consistently, by deed and word (your July 1971 issue, "SOS Environment", for instance) affirms that the life of every human being is the foremost "dignity" of all.

Edith Sandemont
Lille University, France

OPEN WINDOWS

Sir,

By a curious coincidence I received your November 1971 issue devoted to the fight against racism, on the same day that I saw a press release announcing that Unesco had just expelled the Republic of China.

That Unesco, whose international action is limited to the problems of education, science and culture, could, for what can only be political reasons, expel a nation that has served the United Nations and Unesco faithfully since their foundation, is beyond my comprehension.

Furthermore, I understand that the exclusion measure was taken by Unesco's Executive Board, whereas, as it was pointed out, under the Constitution of Unesco, only the General Conference has the authority to take such a step.

I am not politically involved either with the China of Formosa or that of Peking. I have "a window open on the world", and this enables me to observe, compare and judge.

It would indeed be a pity if you were to "open a window" on certain parts of the world while closing the door to others with so much to teach us.

Georges Terlinden
Brussels, Belgium

Unesco's Executive Board decided on October 29, 1971, that "From today onwards, the Government of the People's Republic of China is the only legitimate representative of China at Unesco", and it "invited the Director-General to act accordingly." The vote was 25 for, two against and five abstentions. — Editor.

YOUTH'S EYE VIEW OF UNESCO

Congratulations on the series of articles about Unesco by the Canadian student, Wayne McEwing (August-September 1971). The author's description of Unesco reflects the sincere and candid viewpoint of youth, and its message will be clear to young people the world over. In honest, straightforward terms, he spells out the anxieties of youth, eager for all men to live in harmony with their world, and the deep concern of youth over international problems.

Paulo Meneses Leite
Aracaju, Brazil

WRONG GENERAL

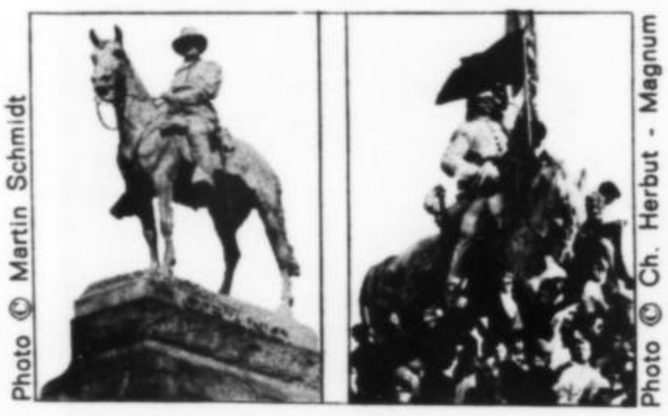
Sir,

I recently came across your special issue on Youth (April 1969). It is excellent; it says many things about young people that should have been said a long time ago, although it does not make the point that all age groups form a continuum of life that is interdependent.

However, in the photo caption on page 11, your writers have fallen into error in identifying the statue in Chicago as that of General U.S. Grant. It is a statue of John S. Logan, a Civil War political general who founded the Grand Army of the Republic. Neither were the young people shown a "hippie convention".

Loyd Brady
Rotary International
Evanston, Ill., U.S.A.

Gen. Grant — *Gen. Logan*



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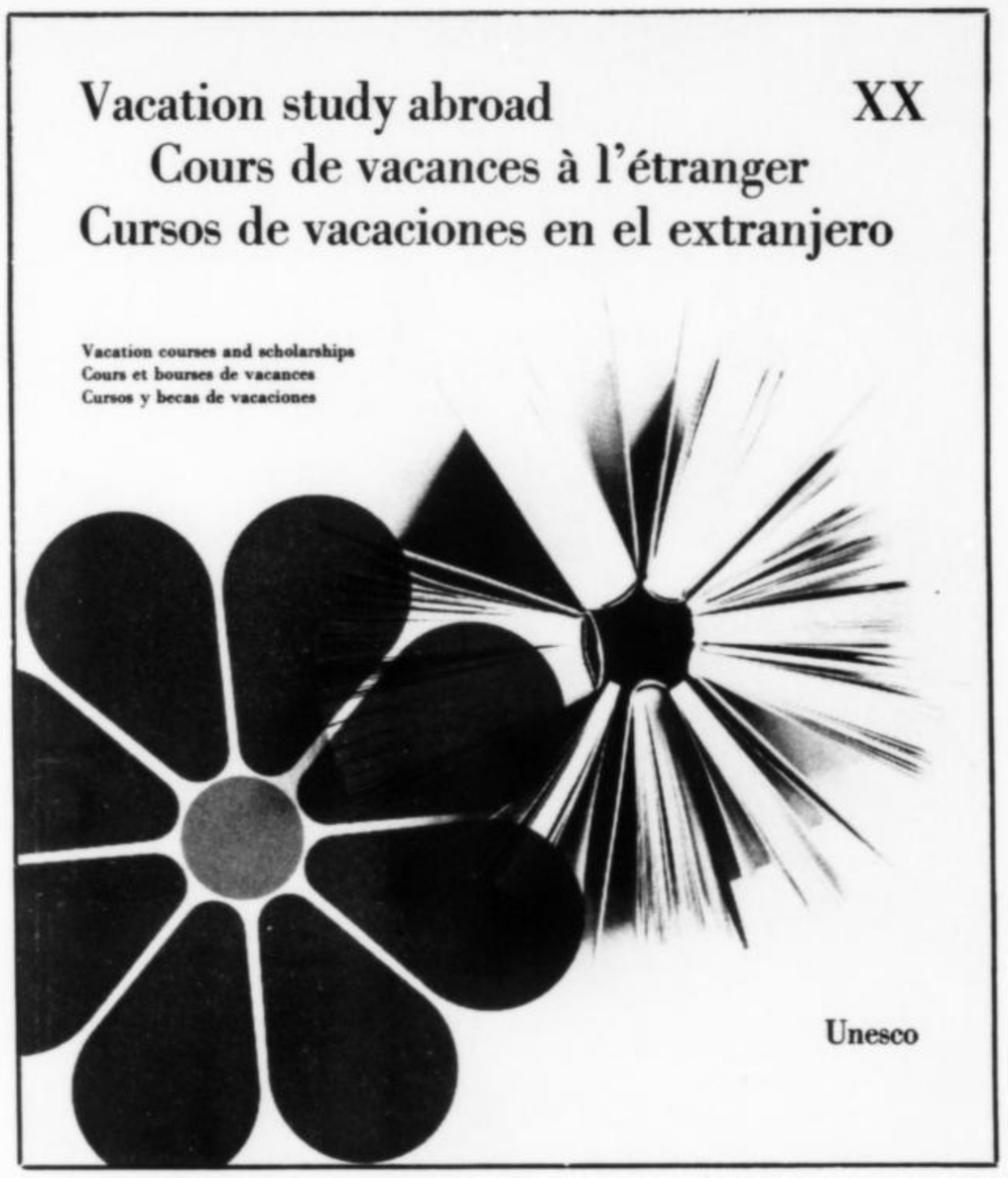

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PLAZA OF THREE CULTURES

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